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ABSTRACT

This practicum was designed to decrease single parent and latency age child stress associated with child and noncustodial parent visitations, and to improve children's school behaviors. A 9-session, 12-week education and training program for single mothers (N=6) and their elementary school age children (N=15), designed to reduce stress by enhancing the children's visitations with their noncustodial parents, was conducted. Extensive homework assignments for all concentrated on coparenting, parent-child communication, reorganizing as a single-parent family, and goal setting. An evaluation of single parent stress and children's behavior was achieved through the administration of a pre/post single parent stress survey, a pre/post child behavior index completed by both teachers and parents, and a program evaluation completed by single parents. Results of the practicum were very positive, with single parent stress reduced by a mean of 21% and children's school behavior enhanced by a mean of 50%. Parent-child relationships were strengthened, the stress of noncustodial parent visitations was decreased, and single parent family reorganization following separation or divorce was enhanced. It is apparent that single parent families caught in the grip of visitation stress can be helped through a program of education and training. This stress reduction allows children to function better and to behave more appropriately in the classroom. (Author/ABL)

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ED300709

PRACTICUM REPORT

Center for the
Advancement of Education
Ed.D. Program

A Training Program to Reduce "Visitation Stress" in Single Parents and Their Latency Age Children

by

Ron Clark

CG 021204

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NOVA UNIVERSITY

A Training Program to Reduce "Visitation Stress" in Single Parents and Their Latency Age Children

by

Ron Clark

Cluster XXIII

A Practicum I Report Presented to the Ed.D. Program
in Early and Middle Childhood
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Education

NOVA UNIVERSITY

1988

PRACTICUM APPROVAL SHEET

This practicum took place as described.

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This practicum report was submitted by Ron Clark under the direction of the adviser listed below. It was submitted to the Ed.D. Program in Early and Middle Childhood and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Nova University.

Approved:

9/1/88
Date of Final Approval of Report

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

ACKNOWLEDGMENT.....iii

TABLE OF CONTENTS.....iv

LIST OF TABLES.....vi

ABSTRACT.....vii

Chapter

I INTRODUCTION.....1

Description of Community.....1
Writer's Work Setting and Role.....4

II STUDY OF THE PROBLEM.....7

Problem Description.....7
Problem Documentation.....9
Causative Analysis.....12
The Related Literature.....15

III ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS...31

Statement of General Goals.....31
Behavioral Expectations.....31
Evaluation Instruments.....32

IV SOLUTION STRATEGY.....35

Discussion and Evaluation of Solutions.....35
Description of Selected Solution.....39
Report of Action Taken.....41

V RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....49

Results.....49
Conclusions.....55
Recommendations.....57
Dissemination.....60

REFERENCES.....62

Appendices

A VISITATION STRESS FLYER.....66

B VISITATION STRESS QUESTIONNAIRE.....68

C CUSTODIAL PARENT VISITATION STRESS SURVEY.....70

D SEPARATION/DIVORCE COPING BEHAVIOR INDEX FOR SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN.....73

E VISITATION STRESS PROGRAM OUTLINE.....76

F VISITATION STRESS PROGRAM STRESSORS.....78

G VISITATION STRESS SCHEDULE.....80

H VISITATION STRESS HANDOUTS.....82

I VISITATION STRESS INSTRUCTOR'S OUTLINES.....84

J VISITATION STRESS HOMEWORK.....96

K VISITATION STRESS TRAINING PROGRAM EVALUATION....105

LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
1	Custodial Parent Visitation Stress Survey Results	50
2	Separation/Divorce Coping Behavior Index For School Age Children	52

ABSTRACT

A Training Program to Reduce "Visitation Stress" in Single Parents and Their Latency Age Children.
Clark, Ron, 1988: Practicum Report, Nova University, Ed.D. Program in Early and Middle Childhood.
Descriptors: Adjustment to Environment/Child Custody/ Divorce/Elementary School Students/One Parent Family/ Parent Child Relationship/Stress Management/Student Behavior

This practicum was designed to decrease single parent and latency age child stress associated with child and noncustodial parent visitations, and improve children's school behaviors. In separation and divorce situations, pervasive former spouse animosity creates an intensely stressful situation for the coparenting adults and their children. This condition often manifests in acting out, or generally deteriorating child behavior in school. By decreasing or relieving single parent stress as well as child stress, family reorganization is revitalized and children are better able to cope with their life tasks.

The writer conducted a nine session, twelve week education and training program for single parents and their elementary school age children, designed to reduce stress by enhancing the children's visitations with their noncustodial parents. Single parents and children met and interacted jointly in a single group. Extensive homework assignments for all concentrated on coparenting, parent-child communications, reorganizing as a single parent family, and goal setting. An evaluation of single parent stress and children's behavior was achieved through the administration of a pre/post single parent stress survey, a pre/post child behavior index completed by both teachers and parents, and a program evaluation completed by the single parents.

The results of this practicum were very positive. Single parent stress was reduced by a mean of 21 percent, while children's school behavior was enhanced by a mean of 50 percent. Parent-child relationships were strengthened, the stress of noncustodial parent visitations was decreased, and single parent family reorganization following separation or divorce was enhanced. It is apparent that single parent families caught in the grip of visitation stress can be helped through a program of education and training. This stress reduction allows children to function better and to behave more appropriately in the classroom.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Description of Community

The setting for this practicum is a private counseling center located in a large suburb of a major Southwestern U.S. city. This, and surrounding suburbs comprise one of the fastest growing areas of the country. During the winter months, the population of over 270,000 is bolstered by at least 75,000 more guests, who generally spend the entire winter here.

With a largely white, middle class social base, the population also has a substantial Hispanic and native American representation. The preponderence of the clients served at this counseling center are white, middle class residents whose families have been living in the state for at least five years.

Environmentally, the extreme summer temperatures shrink outdoor work possibilities, and enhance long summer vacations, or out of town family and business dealings. Conversely, the fall, winter and spring months bring an unusually high influx of visitors and an undesired transient population.

One of the last states to enter the union, this state and area are sparsely populated because of the desert and mountain geographic features of the region. Many of the

local inhabitants still possess visible traits of the pioneer spirit of the previous century, and spend a great deal of their recreational time outdoors, hiking and exploring the desert landscape. Tourism is a major industry of the area and state, and is a factor in the social climate of the area. Many residents of the area own and operate four wheel drive recreational vehicles, and many families own and ride horses.

The divorce laws and practices of this state are considered liberal, and the state has one of the highest rates of divorce in the nation. This is a community property state, in which custody of minor children is usually always awarded to the mother, unless unusual circumstances dictate otherwise. This state is one of the least progressive states in the care of its chronically mentally ill (CMI) population. At present, there is a minimally funded federal/state behavioral health program for the children of poor families. This program formally expired in November of 1987, and is being continued on a periodic basis, as the state legislature ekes funding to this program. There is an abundance of health maintenance organizations (HMO's) and preferred provider organizations (PPO's) in the area, making mental health services for outpatient counseling affordable for most of the middle and higher class employed population.

While the suburb in which this practicum was implemented has what could be termed a normal rate of violent crime, and

a general feeling of law and order, the large city nearby has one of the highest rates of major crime in the nation. The state has one of the highest rates of alcoholism in the nation, with over 53 gallons of beer consumed per capita in 1986. The state suicide rate (per 100,000 population) is one of the highest in the nation, with the suicide rate of the 15-24 year olds of particular concern throughout the state and area.

The specific population involved in this practicum consisted of single parent families with children of latency age (six to twelve years of age). These families have recently been split by separation or divorce, and are experiencing a great deal of stress caused by the disrupted marital relationship, and the specific processes of the separation or divorce itself. The majority of the single parents are women, as Hetherington (1985) and Wallerstein (1985) have also indicated, with a ratio of approximately 9:1. Many of the single parents have lived in this area for two or three years, and approximately twenty percent have relocated to this area following the breakup of their marriage in another state. The children range in age from infants to young adults, but the preponderance of the children seen by the writer have been of latency age. The average family has two or three children, with the majority of the children of latency age. Generally, the families can afford outpatient mental health counseling or an educational or training program, and they are usually motivated to seek

professional help of this nature. Many of these single parent families have few or no relatives in the area, and generally have a feeling of isolation from a normal extended or kin network family support system. Spanier & Hanson (1982), and Unger & Powell (1980) amplify the importance of extended family and kin network support, especially for the single parent and the children involved. This feeling of isolation from normal family and social support systems is normative across most of the white, middle class population.

Writer's Work Setting and Role

The writer is employed as a child, adolescent and family counselor in a large private counseling center which has two offices in the most populous county in this southwestern state. The writer works out of both of these offices, dealing primarily with families from suburban cities surrounding the major southwestern city. In addition to this role as a counselor, the writer is employed as the community relations director of the state's largest behavioral health center.

With an undergraduate degree in psychology, and a master of arts degree in guidance and counseling, the writer has been a counselor for twelve years. While the director of a large military behavioral health center, the writer began to notice that families of separation and

divorce, especially single parent families, evidenced symptoms of moderate to high stress in this situation, but especially so when the child or children were preparing to visit the noncustodial parent. It was apparent that the periods of noncustodial parent visitations produced some of the most stressful periods witnessed by the writer.

The writer spent over 25 years on active duty with the United States Marine Corps, primarily as a jet pilot, and as an aviation staff officer. Much of the writer's time was spent in educating or training new pilots and Marine aviation personnel in a wide variety of educational and training subjects. While on active duty, the writer began to teach psychology and sociology courses at the community college level, both in the United States, and overseas. At the present time, the writer is a member of the adjunct faculty of Ottawa University.

The writer has been active for the past ten years in community based mental and behavioral health programs, and has served as the chairman-elect of a county human service organization. In that capacity, the writer also chaired a local White House Conference on Youth and Children, with over 120 volunteers active in teen prevention issues. As a member of a local Chemical People board of directors, the writer headed a smaller task force which assessed local school dropout, suicide, pregnancy and chemical dependency statistics, and recommended solutions. Recently, the writer has been selected as a member of the program committee of the

county mental health association. The writer is a columnist for a biweekly local newspaper, and has spoken extensively across the state and the southwest on topics ranging from interpersonal communications to teen depression and suicide.

The writer is a student affiliate of the American Psychological Association, a member of the American Association of Suicidology, the American Association for Counseling and Development, and the state association of child treatment specialists. A member of the board of directors of the state association of healthcare marketing and planning, the writer is active in healthcare planning issues, especially as they impact the family. Working with an unusual coalition of media, business, agency and treatment organizations, the writer is co-chairing a statewide symposium on improving mental health treatment in the state.

The writer's colleagues in private practice are a mixture of clinical psychologists and counselors who, for the most part, treat the family as the unit of dysfunction. Their role in this practicum has been one of general support, and they have been more than casually instrumental in supporting the practicum concept in general, and especially enthusiastic in their support for the specific application of this practicum.

CHAPTER II

STUDY OF THE PROBLEM

Problem Description

In single parent families following separation or divorce, there is usually an escalation of stress for both the custodial parent and the children immediately prior to a visit to the noncustodial parent. This escalation continues throughout the visit, or rises further as the spouses or former spouses display hostility, and it remains for an abnormally long time after the visit is over. The visitation stress just described appears as damaging for the child as it is for the custodial and noncustodial parents. From the writer's clinical experience, and seen also by Plummer & Koch-Hattem (1986), Peterson, Leigh & Day (1984), Colletta (1983), and Buehler, Hogan, Robinson & Levy (1985), this visitation stress condition can last for several years, generally as the result of a continuing hostile spousal relationship between the former spouses, as reported by Wallerstein (1985).

Caught in the middle of the vise of visitation stress, the custodial parent is usually unsure of what steps to take, and is often very anxious concerning the children's loyalty, and the tactics, real and imagined, which will be employed by the noncustodial parent, with the child caught squarely

in the middle of this coparental power struggle. The children are generally anxious as they conduct their initial visits with their noncustodial parent, and also anxious as a function of the tension caused by spousal or former spousal hostility and animosity. They are torn between their desire to see their "other" parent, and their loyalty to their custodial parent. Very often, the children act out when in this situation, and their school behaviors usually reflect the conflict. The custodial parent exhibits signs of loss and depression, an apparent loss of self esteem, and generally is unable to concentrate on the tasks at hand, including work matters. In all of this, there is a commonly expressed body of folklore and general knowledge, but it is as if one has to experience all of it before the full impact can be understood, and one can begin to function with any degree of effectiveness.

In an ideal situation, the custodial parent, noncustodial parent, children, and extended family members of a family involved in separation or divorce would receive education and training designed to allow them to function and effect the necessary transitional changes in their lives. The families in which original parents have since remarried would have the option of including the new step parents (and their children) as well. The support system empathy and education received from this sort of program would serve to alleviate much of the stress surrounding noncustodial parent visits, especially early in a separation or divorce situation,

when animosities and hostilities run high. There would be an increase in coparenting cooperation between separating and divorcing spouses, and their extended support systems, with a focus on decreasing the stress of both parents and children.

Briefly stated, the problem is that families of separation and divorce exhibit a great deal of stress concerning the visitations of children with their noncustodial parent. Both parents and children alike are affected, and the resulting coparenting situation is slowed and impaired, often for years, as Wallerstein (1985) reports. This situation often results in a deteriorating or halted developmental pattern for the children, and detracts from the overall effectiveness of both custodial and noncustodial parents.

Problem Documentation

The Fact Sheet of the East Valley Behavioral Health Association for February of 1986 states on page 7:

> "Rapid population shifts cause important social ties to be disrupted; anxiety over jobs, schools, and the family develops. The state ranks 6th highest in the U.S. in the overall average rating for urban stress. Approximately 14% of the people living in the state experience such severe stress they cannot carry out their daily activities. The suicide rate for the state is almost 50% higher than the national average; for those between the ages of 15 and 24, it is 48% higher. The divorce rate for the state is 36% higher than the national average. In 1984, approximately 9,000 women and

children in the state sought help for problems related to domestic violence."

In 1986, the suburban city in which the writer resides published a human service needs survey, which was compiled by the city community council. This survey stated the following on page 17 concerning the needs of its children:

> "Children lack adequate home environments that provide their basic needs. Children experience neglect or abuse. An adequate and affordable level of supervision and protection is needed for preschool and school age children. The instance of substance abuse by children is increasing."

In addition to the above, this survey also indicated that parenting skills training and counseling was necessary for family members. One of the overall needs of this city's children was that they have difficulty coping with life's varied situations, and need help in coping.

The County Human Resources Department, preparatory to conducting a county-wide Needs Assessment Project, conducted a pilot study in a suburb of some 42,000 residents, with a survey sample of 1,358. This pilot survey, conducted in 1982-1983, revealed the following on page 9 as it impacts on this practicum:

> "Three-fourths of the abused are female. There are no differences in age compared with the general population. Although one-half of the abused are married, those who are divorced are much more likely to have been abused. The adults who live in single person or single adult households are overrepresented among the abused. This is also true of larger households and households with children. Adults with emotional health problems are found disproportionately more often among females and individuals who are divorced."

As a followup survey to the pilot mentioned above, the county conducted an East Valley Survey in 1985, which was published in May of 1986. The mechanism for this community survey was a random digit dialing telephone survey methodology which was demonstrated to be accurate within ±2%, capable of successfully assessing sensitive issues, and representative, generalizable and geographically specific. The population of East Valley at the time of the survey was approximately 450,000. The sample size of this survey was approximately 1891 households. In this survey, the marital status categories were: married. widowed, divorced, separated, never married, and not ascertained. Divorced and separated households accounted for 14% of the total, while categories of distress indicated a disproportionately high percentage of involvement by divorced and separated households as follows:

Adult drug abuse.....16%
Heavy adult alcohol consumption.....18%
Demoralization score.....24%
General well being (Negative adult well being).38%
Unmet physical health needs.....15%

Respondents to this survey also indicated various needs which were not presently being met. Applicable to this practicum were the following, rated along a "very well", "well", "fair", "poor", "very poor", and "don't know" scale:

Need	"Fair", "Poor" & "Very Poor"
Parenting skills education	62%

Financial assistance for single parents with dependent children	57%
Personal living skills	55%
Child support enforcement	55%

In his work as a psychiatric hospital community liaison director, the writer dealt extensively with area psychologists and psychiatrists, who personally corroborated the findings discussed above. As a private practice counselor, the writer observed that a specific focus of the above mentioned social stressors was the difficulty experienced by families involved in separation or divorce in functioning normally. The stress and anxiety associated with this condition, especially during situations where the children were visiting with their noncustodial parents, was seen as disruptive to all involved, and often persisted for several years.

Causative Analysis

While the primary cause of the problem may be seen as the act of separation or divorce itself, it may well be that the relationship of the parents is in itself a causative factor. In a deteriorating family situation preceeding separation or divorce, the levels of stress and tension can be very high for all concerned. Separation or divorce can often lead to a feeling of relief, based upon the circumstances. As a general rule, the quality of the relationship between separating or divorcing spouses sets

the tone for the level of stress each participant may be subjected to. The better the relationship, the less the stress, and vice versa. In reality, the parental relationship has usually deteriorated to the point where there is a great deal of emotion and friction between the two, and high levels of stress for both, but especially for the spouse who was "left".

A second cause of stress for separating or divorcing families is the separation or divorce process itself. Few situations in life have as much emotional potential for stress as this process. In addition to a sense of failure, loss, and diminishing self esteem on the part of all concerned, there are the additional stressors and pressures of legal proceedings, financial restructuring, new roles to learn and accomplish, and new familial-social relationships and problems. Usually, there has been no preparation for this devastating process, and a great deal of fear is inherent in the rapid changes which occur almost daily as the process evolves.

Beyond separation and divorce proceedings, and the hostile relationship of the spouses, a third causative factor is the emotional state of the custodial parent. In addition to all of the above mentioned stressors of separation and divorce, the custodial parent is beset with the additional problems of single parenting children who are usually caught up in some aspect of this situation themselves, and may be anything but cooperative. Often, the totality of the

stressors involved cause the issue of child visitation with the noncustodial parent to be a particularly difficult emotional experience for both the parents and children.

A fourth causative factor seen is the issue of the relationship between the custodial parent and children. Issues of loyalty, family rule differences between the two households, quality of interaction between the custodial parent and the children, and the timing of the children's visitations can frequently act as stressors for the custodial parent. As the children solve their own problems of separation and divorce, their actions will often result in additional stress for both themselves and their custodial parent.

A fifth cause for visitation stress is the influence of actions by extended family members and kin network members. As they interact, in either a supportive or nonsupportive role, the level of visitation stress often rises, even as a result of their participation. The issues of nonmaternal grandparent visitation in the face of a hostile spousal relationship, and custodial spouse parents or family members who are critical of the separation or divorce are especially stressful.

Last is the issue of disputed custody and/or visitation rights of the noncustodial spouse or ex-spouse. Whatever the issues in dispute, the stress level surrounding these visits is usually high. Ranging from the threat of physical or emotional abuse to the coercion of the children concerning

their custody and the timing of noncustodial visitations, these situations are emotionally debilitating to the custodial parent.

Not a causative factor in itself, but an important determinant of visitation stress level is the physical exchange of the children during visitation periods. Often the only proximal social contact with the "other" parent is during the "loaning out" of the children by the custodial parent. Based upon the specific circumstances of this exchange, such as: in the home, at the home of the spouse's parents, etc., this can be a very emotional and potentially explosive situation, ultimately resulting in an increased stress level.

The Related Literature

Current literature on separation, divorce, and single parenting documents the stressful nature of separation and divorce, and describes intervention, counseling and education measures for parents and children in a variety of settings. The problems and stressors of single parenthood and of children of separation and divorce are outlined and discussed in literally hundreds of journal articles and monographs. While visitation and custody issues are discussed from a variety of viewpoints, no specific mention of the term visitation stress was found. For purposes of this practicum,

visitation stress is defined as that stress generated by the visitations of children of separation and divorce with their noncustodial parents, in either a single or joint custody situation. This stress can be a factor in the lives of the former spouses, their children, and extended family members who are in emotional proximity, or within "fallout range" of visitation activity.

Hetherington, Cox & Cox (1985), Wallerstein (1985 a,b), Kurdek & Seisky (1980), Guidubaldi & Perry (1985), and Furstenburg, Peterson, Nord & Zill (1983) discuss the effects of divorce on children. They collectively indicate that separation and divorce can be debilitating for children, with the effects lasting well into young adulthood. Hetherington, Cox & Cox (1985) indicate that, in the first few years following divorce, children in divorced families show more antisocial, impulsive acting out disorders, more aggression and noncompliance, more dependency, anxiety and depression, more difficulties in social relationships, and more problem behavior in school. Apparently, these effects are more severe for boys than for girls. For most children, divorce is only one of a series of transitions and reorganizations that follow separation and marital dissolution. Wallerstein (1985 a) mentions that close to two thirds of the young people in her study (N=40) felt that, as a consequence of their parent's divorce, their childhood and adolescence had been significantly burdened, and their lives impacted. Guidubaldi & Perry (1985) indicate that

divorce is the most pervasive of the "severe" psychological stressors for children. They mention that forty to fifty per cent of U.S. children born in the 1970's will spend some time living in single parent families. Also mentioned is the idea that there may be sex differences in parenting styles with female single parents providing less emotional support for boys. Peterson, Leigh & Day (1984) looked at children of divorce by applying family stress theory and examining child-parent relationships in that context. They saw the custodial and noncustodial parent relationships with these children as potentially stressful for the children. Stolberg & Anker (1983) and Peterson & Zill (1986) looked at behavioral problems of the children of separation and divorce. Stolberg & Anker (1983) identified higher rates of delinquency, enuresis, depression, aggressiveness to parents, sexual acting out and school problems. They remark that poor parenting appears to be most marked one year after the divorce. Peterson & Zill (1986) indicate that in the year following divorce, children became more dependent, disobedient, aggressive, demanding, and less affectionate, while parents became less consistent, less affectionate, and less able to control their children's behavior. Five years after the divorce, one third of the children in their sample were still seriously disturbed, and another third were having psychological difficulties. Hodges & Bloom (1984) identified the issue of preschool, latency and adolescent children of divorce reacting differently to the divorce of

their parents. In latency age children, more than in any other age, boys from divorced homes acted out with greater aggression toward peers, while girls evidenced anxiety and depression. They detail increased nightmares, sadness, grieving, fear, feelings of deprivation, anger, and conflicts of loyalty. From the above mentioned studies of the effects of separation and divorce on children, it is clear that children are greatly affected by separation and divorce, and act out along sex and age-related pathways.

The literature is replete with indications of the stressful nature of separation and divorce on women and custodial singe parent mothers and fathers. Kurdek & Blisk (1983), and Propst, Pardington, Ostrom & Watkins (1986) detail the experience of recently divorced single mothers. Propst, Pardington, Ostrom & Watkins (1986) mention that the female-headed, single parent family is the fastest growing family form in America. They mention that these women have higher rates of anxiety and depression than any other marital status group, and are proportionately the major consumers of mental health services. Kurdek & Blisk (1983) mention that single parent mother's post-separation stress, parental conflict in the post-separation period, and high degrees of environmental change occasioned by the divorce are related to their children's social and psychological adjustment or maladjustment.

Isaacs & Leon (1986), and Leslie & Grady (1985) looked at the changes in single parent mother's social networks

following divorce, and found that mothers who had supportive relationships experienced less stress, were more effective parents, and made better transitions in self-identity than mothers who were more isolated. Isaacs & Leon (1986) concluded that the children's adjustment with respect to behavior problems was related to the mother's ability to receive support from her own parents, while not relinquishing her instrumental role. They mention that the larger family network may bolster the children's adjustment to divorce, either indirectly through the mother's enhanced adjustment, or directly, without affecting the mother. The stress of separation and divorce on the single parent mother or father is well documented. As the stress level of the single parent is alleviated, there is a healing effect upon the custodial children as well. Family network systems can supportively reduce the stress for all of the members of a separating or divorcing family, and enhance the post separation or divorce recovery phase of reorganization.

For purposes of this practicum, there are three issues regarding males as single parent fathers, or separating and divorcing fathers. First, there is the issue of their role as a divorcing husband, then as a divorcing father, and last as a single parent father. In the literature, White & Bloom (1981), Ahrons (1983), Berkman (1986), Stern (1980), and Stewart, Schwebel & Fine (1986) discuss the issues of stress and trauma concerning separating and divorcing fathers. White & Bloom (1981) indicate that marital separation is

related to increased emotional instability in men. They state that the experience of separation for men is one characterized by social strain, isolation, and poor self esteem, and that the primary stresses are the external pressures of leaving the protectiveness of the marital role and the internal pressures of loss. Ahrons (1983) reports that the continued involvement of the father, characterized by free or open access between father and children, coupled with a mutually supportive and cooperative coparental relationship were found to result in better psychological adjustment of the children. Stern (1980), reporting on perceptions of the father and mother roles, states that both single parent mothers and remarried mothers rated the children's father as more important than a mother. Stewart, Schwebel & Fine (1986) indicate that divorced noncustodial fathers, especially in the initial transition period (approximately two years), appear to suffer from a pervasive sense of loss, with the most traumatic loss being that of their children. It was seen that the noncustodial fathers experienced increased depression, lowered self esteem, increased anxiety, more serious adjustment problems, sleep difficulties and poor work performance. Because of the emotional upheaval associated with meeting children for brief intervals, many noncustodial fathers, over time, began seeing their children less frequently. By contrast, Stewart, Schwebel & Fine (1986) report that custodial fathers generally experience positive adjustments in their roles as

single parents, and find that being a parent is richly rewarding. Smith & Smith (1981) report on child rearing and single parent fathers, and indicate that the primary difficulty experienced by single parent fathers was the result of socialization in our society in which the father is not expected to participate in childcare and nurturing, and hence does not learn the behaviors necessary to meet his children's emotional needs. It is apparent that separating and divorcing males are at risk emotionally in an extremely stressful environment. While single parent fathers appear to be better off emotionally than noncustodial fathers, they were not able to meet their children's emotional needs.

While much of the above discussion of separation and divorce and the impact of stress on all concerned comes out of the general divorce literature, several researchers have written directly about the stress of separation and divorce. Unger & Powell (1980) discuss the role of social networks in supporting families under stress. They indicate that strengthening a family's use of social network ties will reduce the stress of divorce. Buehler, Hogan, Robinson & Levy (1985) indicate that, although the amount of change varies among families, most experience at least moderate amounts of stress during the divorce transition. They also report that fathers who perceived less relationship stress after divorce seemed to maintain the parent-child relationship for a length of time post-divorce with satisfaction. Apparently, the visitation ritual does not

facilitate the repair of strained relationships. Colletta (1983) indicates that low income mothers are consistently under the greatest stress. They also found that mothers with high levels of stress were more demanding and restrictive with their children. Plummer & Koch-Hattem (1986) outline family stress and adjustment to divorce using Hill's ABCX model of family adaption to stress. They saw a pileup of stressors within the family as a former spouse adjusts to divorce, including the presence of environmental stressors, such as an adult child leaving home, and non-normative stressors, such as financial difficulties and the reorganization of social relationships. Mediators of this pileup of stressors were the personal and family resources available to the former spouse, the family's definition of the divorce, and the adjustment to attain a new level of family functioning.

The subject of visitation as described in this practicum is growing in public interest, as divorce approaches the 50% level for couples marrying in the late 1970's. With approximately 30% of the children in America expected to reside in single parent homes by 1990, visitation has become an important issue. Johnston, Campbell & Mayes (1985) state that one third of divorcing parents are embittered and hostile for two to five years post-separation, with one ninth of all children likely to experience ongoing parental acrimony over their custody and care. The longer the marital disharmony, the greater the risk to the child. In their

report of families involved in custody and visitation disputes, it was found that all latency age and two thirds of late latency age children were reported to be acutely distressed by the parental fights. If a dispute between parents occurred when one came to pick up the children for a visitation, almost two thirds of the children in both early and late latency age tended to avoid the dispute. They blocked their eyes and ears, retreated to their bedrooms, and ignored their parents. It should be noted that these were the more adaptive responses of the healthier children. If the parents were actually fighting or very tense with one another, the children were at a higher stress level, and sometimes remained that way for months. At the time of visitation, all children were usually somewhat withdrawn and passive, with some children reported to be "spaced out", "zombie-like", and unresponsive. Other more distressed reactions were high anxiety, apprehension, tension and restlessness. Younger children also showed more regressive and aggressive behaviors. The children would hide, run away, lock themselves in the bathroom, or simply refuse to budge. Parents frequently complained that the children took hours and sometimes days to settle down after the visitations. Perhaps the most dramatic finding was the fact that more than two fifths of all the children in the Johnston study demonstrated some kind of somatic symptom or exacerbation of a physical illness at the time of the visitation transition. Lowery & Settle (1985) report that the structure of custody

and visitation may be particularly critical for those families which do not seem to be able to use the distance of divorce to improve their level of functioning. Koch & Lowery (1984), writing about visitation and the noncustodial father, report that post-divorce visitation was at its peak two months after the divorce was finalized. Within two years, the visitation pattern decreased dramatically. They found that young children aged two to eight saw their noncustodial parent most often. Children who were able to maintain post-divorce relationships with both parents were better able to adjust to the divorce. Koch & Lowery (1984) indicate that visitation is significantly related to the parental relationship, and that an emphasis on restructuring, rather than dissolving, the parental relationship may be very important. Alexander (1980) reports that an east coast Parents Without Partners group rated the children's best interests over other factors such as visiting or custodial parent's best interests, and the parental relationship. Alexander indicates that exposure of the group to Parents Without Partners programs sensitized them to the needs of children, and they restructured visitation patterns accordingly.

It is generally conceded in the separation and divorce literature that the schoolwork and school behavior of children involved in a family separation or divorce often deteriorates. Kinard & Reinherz (1986) indicate that family disruption has been found to have negative effects on school achievement

for both males and females. Language achievement, total achievement and teacher's ratings of productivity were lower for children from disrupted homes, and teachers consistently rated boys as having more problems than girls with respect to productivity. Children in recently disrupted families had the lowest scores on language and total achievement in grade four, and were perceived by third grade teachers as being the least productive. The authors speculate that increased anxiety and stress in mothers in response to separation and divorce may lead to increased anxiety in their children, which in turn may affect the children's school performance. Parish & Philip (1982) researched the issue of modifying the self concept of children from a divorced or intact family. They found that teachers seemed to have been far more successful with children from intact families than from divorced unmarried or divorced remarried families. It was felt that the needs of children from divorced families might be too special, too great, or possibly outside the realm of the teacher's influence.

Beyond the issues of family members, stress, visitation and school, the general separation and divorce literature has contributions for this practicum. Spanier & Thompson (1983) discuss the terminal stage of marriage (that period before the final separation) as a traumatic peak in the dissolution process, especially for the person who was left. They also chronicled the issue of disapproval of the separation or divorce by others as being associated with the trauma of the

adult participants. Weingarten (1985), McPhee (1984), Albrecht (1980), Bloom & Kindle (1985), and Goldsmith (1980) all discuss the spousal adjustment to separation and divorce, and the continuing post-divorce spousal relationship. Weingarten (1985) recognizes that the high levels of stress evoked by divorce may be insurmountable given that divorce confronts individuals with major emotional losses in conjunction with legal problems, new concerns about money, jobs, children, family and friends, and disruption of familiar activities, routines and habits. McPhee (1984) postulates that role adjustment at the familial, interpersonal, and intrapersonal levels has a primary influence on the effects and adjustment to divorce for both spouses and children. Albrecht (1980) reiterates that it is not likely that divorce will ever become matter of fact, nor that it will ever become painless or casual or nonchalant. He mentions that the newly divorced are likely to suffer at least some amount of personal disorganization, anxiety, unhappiness, loneliness, low work efficiency, increased drinking, and other problem behaviors. Bloom & Kindle (1985) noticed a dramatic reduction in the frequency of contact between ex-spouses, particularly between six and eighteen months after separation. Goldsmith (1980) found that, while mutually supportive and cooperative coparental relationships are optimal for children's post-divorce adjustment, many former spouses have difficulty actually working out this kind of mutually supportive and cooperative relationship.

Lowery (1985), Leupnitz (1986), and Derdeyn & Scott (1984) reported on the issues of child custody. Lowery (1985) identifies two variables which have been identified as related to children's post-divorce adjustment: conflict in the post-divorce parental relationship, and the child's access to the noncustodial parent. Leupnitz (1986) comments that joint custody at its best is superior to single parent custody at its best. She also mentions that in her own clinical experience, although women still receive custody in most cases, almost all women going through divorce still suffer the anxiety of losing custody of their children. Derdeyn & Scott (1984), commenting on joint custody, state that continued contact with both parents is beneficial for children if there is an absence of significant coparental interpersonal conflict, but has harmful effects if the parents cannot interact with some reasonably low level of conflict. Where parents can cooperate, they feel that joint custody may provide the optimum solution for many children.

Concerning single parent families, Hanson & Sporakowski (1986) indicate that the largest single parent group is headed by divorced mothers (36.8%), the second largest group by never married mothers (24.4%), and the third by separated mothers (18.5%). Other categories of single parent families in order of size are: widows (6.8%), divorced fathers (5.8%), separated fathers (2.4%), spouse-absent mothers (2.4%), never married fathers (1.5), and widowers (.9%). Their study indicated that persons raised primarily by single

mothers tended to have lower educational, occupational, and economic attainment than their counterparts during early adulthood, even after economic conditions of the family of origin were controlled. Gelman (1985), also writing on the trends of single parent families in this country, indicates that in 1984, single parents headed 25.7% of the families with children under eighteen in the U.S. He writes that experts predict that one out of every three families, possibly one out of every two, will be headed by a single parent in 1990, with approximately half of the children born in the 1980's spending at least part of their childhood living with one parent.

In studies which contrasted and compared single parent males and females, Defrain & Eirick (1981) and Day & Bahr (1986) indicated that while being a single parent is very similar in terms of male and female lifestyles, there is a marked difference when comparing financial stress. Defrain & Eirick (1981) write that, although there are specific differences related to sex, for the most part the lifestyle of both men and women as single parents is quite similar. Day and Bahr (1986) concluded that when one considers the financial stress of separation and divorce, both before and after separation and divorce, it is the single parent father who is subjected to the least stress.

Brown (1982) and Kolevson & Gottlieb (1983) looked at the impact of divorce. Brown (1982) studied the impact of divorce on the extended family, and found that divorce

generally has the greatest impact on the parents of the divorcing spouses, and a lessening impact as one moves outward in the family system to siblings, aunts, grandparents, cousins and in-laws. She indicates that, although the issues are similar, the experience of the extended family member is likely to be quite different than that of the divorcing spouse. Kolevson & Gottlieb (1983) comment that it is unclear as to the actual duration of the impact of divorce and divorce proceedings, where the intensity of feelings experienced and the length of time needed to complete the process is dependent upon each individual. Even after five years, many marital partners still experience extreme stress and discomfort over their divorce. Also commenting on the impact of divorce, Crosby, Gage & Raymond (1983) examined the impact of divorce in terms of the time it took for grief resolution. They found that while there is often a sense of guilt and failure associated with the loss of a loved one via death, the feelings and sense of loss associated with divorce are severely compounded by the intrusion of guilt, failure, and familial and societal scripts, norms and expectations.

It is apparent, from the many studies presented above, that separation and divorce are in themselves a stressful period for all concerned, with decreased functioning in all societal areas usually evidenced by those nearest the center of stress, the separating or divorcing family. Interpersonal, intrapersonal, work, school and familial functioning are all

affected, and after-effects may be seen for years to come. When one considers that most single parents will eventually remarry, and by doing so become even more statistically prone to divorce again, it would appear that the stress of separation and divorce is a phenomenon which most Americans will experience in their lives. In the overall picture of separation and divorce stress, there is a specific stressor associated with noncustodial parent visitations by the children which this practicum addresses as visitation stress. This visitation stress is especially difficult to counteract because of the distance between the spouses, both physically and emotionally. Unless this visitation stress is decreased by an improved coparental relationship, it is bound to affect either or both spouses well into the future, and act as a causative agent in the possible failure of subsequent marriages. It is not too far fetched to speculate that the subsequent marriage partners of either or both former spouses could become pawns in a game of chess where their checkmate would be all but guaranteed. It is imperative, considering the increase in the divorce rate, that the divorce and reorganization continuum of the American family be defused of the emotionality and stress which is so very harmful to spouses, children, families and communities across our land. Programs which educate parents and families about separation, divorce and the reorganization of the family are surely mandated.

CHAPTER III

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

Statement of General Goals

Generally speaking, there are two goals associated with this practicum. The first goal is to reduce the stress within the target households. The second goal is to increase the level of school functioning of the children within the target households. A reduction of familial stress will lower the anxiety level of parents, children and extended family members. This reduction in stress, coupled with separation and divorce coping skills learned by all participating family members will result in an increase in the level of school functioning of the children. As the level of school functioning of the children increases, there will be a corresponding increase in positive school behaviors.

Behavioral Expectations

Within the constraints of a practicum timeframe of three months, the writer felt that both immediate stress reduction behavior displayed by all participating family members, and an increase in positive school behaviors of the participating children would be both possible and measurable. The following behavioral objectives were chosen for this practicum.

1. Over a period of 12 weeks, overall familial stress will be reduced in all of the target households of custodial single parents whose children are engaged in visitations with noncustodial parents, as evidenced by scores of 50 or less on the Custodial Parent Visitation Stress Survey (Appendix C).

2. Over a period of 12 weeks, the level of school functioning of all participating children in target households will increase, as evidenced by scores of 200 or less on the Separation/Divorce Coping Behavior Index for School Age Children (Appendix D).

Evaluation Instruments

The first objective, to decrease stress in custodial single parents and their children, was measured by the Custodial Parent Visitation Stress Survey. While this device will not be administered to the children, an improvement in stress reduction of the custodial parent will usher in a correspondingly lower child stress level. This evaluation device was prepared by using survey items from a variety of stress measurement instruments. While the writer is not in a position to declare the validity and reliability of this survey, it appears that face validity is quite high, and the adequacy of this instrument for this practicum appears to be reasonable. This survey is particularly sensitive to issues of separation and divorce, single parenting and visitation. For purposes of this practicum, this survey will be

administered as a pre and post training device. This survey measures stress relative to both past and present situations, as well as identifying levels of stress present in relationships and specific situations, such as the visit of a child with a noncustodial parent. This survey was given to participating single parents, to be completed on the first and last days of training, approximately 12 weeks apart.

The second objective, to increase school functioning of the participating children in single parent families, was measured by the Separation/Divorce Coping Behavior Index for School Age Children. This device measures stress, coping behavior, and trends in behavior of school age children. This index was filled out by both the custodial parent and the children's teacher. Each child received a total of four gradings, as both parent and teacher filled out a pre and post training index. This index is a written device with no time limit, and was adapted from several child school behavior instruments. Reliability and validity are unknown, but face validity appears high, and the internal items are essentially those used in a variety of behavioral evaluation instruments. As both the custodial parent and teacher will be evaluating the child with this index, all scores will be displayed, as well as the mean scores, and any differences between evaluators.

In addition to these two evaluation devices, a program evaluation will also be administered at the completion of training, and will be used to corroborate the evaluation

survey and index. This program evaluation and the objective results of the evaluation devices will also be aided by the subjective, but admissable impressions of change observed by the writer and co-facilitator.

CHAPTER IV

SOLUTION STRATEGY

Discussion and Evaluation of Solutions

The reduction of visitation stress in custodial single parents and their latency age children, and the enhancement of school behaviors of these children, could no doubt be successfully accomplished in a variety of ways. The school setting is arguably a very adequate setting in which to both decrease stress and enhance the school behaviors of these children, and could also be a setting in which their single parents received training as well. As the single parents are probably employed during the day, this would have to be an evening or weekend program. While the school may be an excellent choice for education and training of children, it may not be equipped to reduce single parent stress as well. The scope of only working with certain children of separation and divorce may be too narrow an application.

The literature describes therapeutic interventions with separating and divorcing parents and families, and group and individual therapy for all family members. There is also mention of educational groups for parents, where there is not necessarily a therapeutic environment. Ferreiro, Warren & Konanc (1986) prescribe a divorce assessment proposal (ADAP) which focuses assessment for further intervention on six areas:

separation and divorce timeline; family map and family functioning; the divorce story; divorce agreement and legal issues; attachment issues and the grief process; and the balance sheet of gains and losses. The writer has gleaned valuable educational materials from this study and was able to adapt them to this practicum. Plummer & Koch-Hattem (1986) indicate that the divorced mother might benefit most from divorce adjustment counseling in a woman's divorce adjustment group wherein she might find the most effective context for altering meanings associated with the divorce and post-divorce adjustment. They suggest that stress management techniques might facilitate the post-divorce adjustment of men more effectively than that of women. For men, as well as for women, divorce adjustment work within a group may be helpful. The writer agrees that a group context is valuable for the separating or divorcing family to participate in, even in a training and education mode. Hassal & Madar (1980) state that in a separation/divorce group context, the assimilation of new information can be very helpful in forming the single parent's reality concept. Kaslow (1984) discusses separation and divorce intervention as a function of the stage of separation which the family or single parent is currently in. The stages are predivorce, during divorce, divorce, and postdivorce, and the intervention strategies vary from one stage to the next. Overall, Kaslow provides an excellent model of stages in the divorce process. Bloom & Kindle (1985) caution that

interventions need to be sensitive to how long the single parents have been separated or divorced in order to be of optimal help. Morrissette (1987) provides excellent role play techniques which can be utilized for parent-child groups. Warren & Amara (1984), commenting on a Parenting After Divorce (PAD) Project, describe an educational prevention program to help parents facilitate their children's adjustment after divorce. This excellent project and study did not provide direct education to children, but rather through the education received by their parents. Stolberg & Ullman (1984) reported on the development and validation of the Single Parent Questionnaire, which assesses five dimensions of parenting: problem solving skills, parental warmth, discipline procedures, parent roles, and enthusiasm for parenting. Criteria within these five dimensions have been applied to this practicum in the area of problem solution. Wedemeyer & Johnson (1982) emphasize the importance of learning the single parent role, and suggest the following pattern: list the tasks the single parent is facing, list the types of tasks carried out by each spouse during the marriage, draw the relationship between the marital partnership and the single parent situation, and evaluate the single parent's current tasks for efficiency and ego investment. Thiessen, Avery & Joanning (1980) taught recently divorced women the communication skills necessary to enhance their self esteem, strengthen their social support systems, and erase the distress of post-divorce

adjustment.

Writing on the interventions of children, Kinard & Reinherz (1986) commented on the effects of divorce and children's school aptitude and achievement. They stated that preventive intervention targeted at children experiencing family disruption would be useful in reducing the occurrence of problems in school performance. They suggest support groups in school settings for children of recently disrupted families. Nichols (1986) suggests that the sibling subsystem be used as the focus of intervention when working with children of separation and divorce. He lists immediate intervention goals of coping and adaptation, and recommends sibling subsystem intervention strategies. Kurdek & Siesky (1980) found positive children's reactions and adjustments related to children's (a) defining divorce in terms of psychological separation between the parents, (b) sharing divorce related concerns with friends, (c) holding positive evaluations of both parents, and (d) having acquired strengths and responsibilities as a result of the divorce experience. Hodges & Bloom (1984) state that programs of parent education can encourage parents to help the child talk out rather than act out feelings of distress and anger. Nichols (1984), in writing on the interventions for children of separation and divorce, states that the major focus should be on the reorganized family system, the continuing parental subsystem, and the reactions and adjustments of the child to the marital breakup and subsequent family reorganization.

Description of Selected Solutions

The solution selected for this practicum was an educational, skills building, and supportive training program for single parents and their children, designed to reduce visitation stress for all, and enhance the children's school performance. This program was to be conducted over a three month period, with a total of nine sessions. For the first six weeks of this program, the training sessions would take place every week, then taper off to one session every two weeks for the last six weeks. This training would be conducted in a private setting, on Saturdays, and in the evening when all family members would be available. Single parents of both sexes, their children, ages six to 12, and extended family members would be invited to attend. Interested school guidance counselors and other professionals would be able to attend any one session, or the entire program. On a case by case basis, older children would be invited to attend. Noncustodial spouses would be able to attend, but would not normally attend the same sessions with their spouses and children. Adults who are married and are contemplating separation or divorce would be able to attend. While the literature describes educational training programs for either parents or children, the writer could not find a recent example of a training experience in which both the parents and their children received training in the same classroom. In the context of this practicum, the parents

and children would separate for the first hour into groups. Following their separate training, both groups would come back together for another hour of joint training. The writer and an assistant would separately conduct the two groups during the first hour, then co-facilitate the same group during the second hour. It is felt that this unique combination of groups will enhance the stress reduction process for all, as well as enhancing the children's school behaviors. No mention of this sort of combined training was found in the current literature.

By offering this training to single parents of both sexes and their latency aged children (six to 12), a wider segment of the population will be served, and a more immediate result will be obtained. For purposes of this practicum, a group of approximately six to eight single parents and 12 to 16 latency aged children was desired. Should the combined group be too large to manage and achieve the practicum objectives, a smaller grouping will be formed. It is anticipated that this educational training program will continue well past this practicum timeframe, achieving an evolving program enhanced by this practicum.

This educational training program will initially focus on issues of self esteem, loss, and coping with the imbalance of separation and divorce, then shift to interactive skills between single parents and their children, active listening, and single parent skills. The program will then focus on spousal relationships, changing marital/parental roles, and

end with problem solving/planning for the future. See Appendix I for a complete description of all session outlines. Note that the first six training sessions comprise the core of the program, with the last three sessions intended to address problem solving and planning for the future, spaced out over the last six weeks.

Report of Action Taken

Following the writer's choice of a solution strategy, a flyer (Appendix A) was mailed to approximately 200 referral sources, and an advertisement was taken out in a small local biweekly newspaper. Six single parent mothers initially responded to this publicity, and were interviewed for one hour by the writer to ascertain their suitability for this practicum program. It was determined that all six families would benefit from this visitation stress program, and a date for the program to begin was mutually established. It was agreed that the program would take place on Saturdays, at 5pm.

Prior to the first session on April 2nd, the writer conducted an indoctrination session for his wife, who would become his co-facilitator for this practicum. The writer's wife is a skilled group facilitator and educator who was in touch with the general rationale of this practicum, and only required specific instructor outline briefing. After approximately four hours of orientation and discussion, the

writer felt comfortable in proceeding with the initial session.

On Saturday, April 2nd, this solution strategy was implemented, with four single parent mothers and 11 children. The single parent mothers ranged in age from 25 to 39, and were all white, middle class working mothers. Three of the single parents had their college degrees, but were not necessarily working in the occupational field in which they had received their academic training. The children ranged in age from six to 12, and had sufficient control over their behaviors that they were not disruptive to the combined group. Generally, all of the children were at their grade level, and were not experiencing extreme difficulty with their schoolwork.

For the first session, the adults and children were separated into two groups for the first hour, then were combined into a single group of adults and children. By the third week, the group had increased to six single parent mothers and 15 children, for a combined group of 21. After the first session, it was felt that two of the six year olds were too disruptive in the combined group, and their parents mutually agreed that it was best for all that they be removed. In this first session, the single parents were given a large packet of materials to supplement the instructional periods. Included in this packet were an entry questionnaire (Appendix B), a Custodial Parent Visitation Stress Survey (Appendix C), two copies of a Separation/Divorce Coping Behavior Index for

School Age Children (Appendix D), a program outline (Appendix E), a copy of Visitation Stress Program Stressors (Appendix F), a Visitation Stress Schedule (Appendix G), and a collection of 46 handouts (Appendix H). They were instructed to complete the questionnaire, Custodial Parent Visitation Stress Survey, and one of the Separation/Divorce Coping Behavior Indexes for School Age Children later that evening, and bring them to the next session. The other index was to be sent to school to be filled out by the child's teacher, and mailed back to the writer in a self addressed, stamped envelope. Initially, only the teacher was to be given the index, but as the starting date for this practicum solution implementation slipped, it was apparent that the three month implementation timeframe would end after school had ended for the summer. At that point, it was decided to also administer the index to the custodial parent.

Following the first session, which was conducted in accordance with the instructor's outlines (Appendix I), both parents and children were given homework assignments (Appendix J). During session two, it was decided to modify the format of the sessions from two consecutive groups of one hour to a single, combined group of an hour and a half. This modification was made upon the recommendation of the co-facilitator who had instructed the children's group for the first session. She felt that the millieu of the combined group was so superior to what had been accomplished in the child-only group, that the change was warranted. The writer

agreed, and the change was implemented. It is felt that this was a very significant milestone in this practicum implementation. From the second session on, the writer and co-facilitator instructed this combined group, being careful to alternatively, as the dynamics would permit, bring up adult, then child issues. To implement this, the facilitators became either a child or adult advocate for each session, and were careful to alternate this role between sessions. This method proved very comfortable to implement, and was continued for the remainder of the practicum.

During session three, one of the single parents asked for and received permission from the writer to bring her fiancee to the training sessions, along with her 10 and 12 year old sons. This arrangement was ultimately very beneficial to the overall functioning of the combined group. Many of the other adults and children were able to relate to the issues discussed between this would-be stepfather and his prospective stepsons. The ensuing relationship between this single parent and her fiancee was viewed with great interest by all of the other women in the group.

The major dynamic of each session from the second session on was the homework assignment, which both the parents and children were required to complete. A great deal of discussion centered on this homework, and all were eager to "show and tell" what they had accomplished. From a commitment point of view, those single parents and children who repeatedly completed their homework assignments appeared

to gain more benefit from the practicum than those who were more laid back in their approach to the homework assignments.

Each session of the solution strategy began and ended with a prayer. Although this practicum was conducted in a private counseling center staffed exclusively by members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, or "Mormons", a variety of Christian religions were represented amongst the participating single parent families. Through the nine practicum sessions, each parent ultimately led one or more of the prayers. As per the homework assignment, each parent and child in attendance was requested to use prayer in their daily life, and encouraged to attend church services each week. As a result of this spiritual admonition, several families drew closer together through prayer and weekly worship service attendance.

As this solution strategy was conducted in a private counseling center, there was a fee charged for each session. This fee of fifty dollars was not affordable by all, and a generous sliding scale was used. As families were being recruited for this practicum, it became apparent that many could or would not pay for the sessions, and chose not to participate because of this reason. The writer debated over this situation, but was unable to fund the overhead and advertising costs associated with this implementation. For future applications of this implementation strategy, it may be possible to obtain a grant to defray costs, and thereby operate a free program. The idea of being motivated to

change and to succeed in a program such as this, and whether or not the program is free or there is a charge, appears to be a direction for further study.

To ensure optimum attendance at weekly training sessions, the writer attempted to call each single parent each week, preceeding each training session. When the writer was not able to telephone in this fashion, attendance did not appear to be as good as when families were called. For various reasons, four single parent families began training during the first week, and were joined by the fifth family during the second week, and the sixth family during week three. By the fifth week, however, all six single parent families were synchronized due to various non-attendance reasons. The writer feels that care must be exercised in this matter, to ensure some semblance of attendance continuity. With the amount and content variance of each week's homework assignments, it is critical that weekly attendance be viewed as mandatory for the success of this practicum.

As the school year drew to a close in May, the writer provided each family with another Separation/Divorce Coping Behavior Index for School Age Children, to be filled out by each child's school teacher as a post-training instrument. These indexes were then mailed back to the writer in a self-addressed, stamped envelope. At this juncture, each child had completed seven or eight practicum sessions, and had been enrolled in this solution strategy approximately nine weeks.

Following the sixth session, the time interval between sessions was lengthened to a two week interval. This was done as a portion of the overall practicum design to allow more time between sessions for positive action by the single parent families, and to begin to wean them from any dependence upon the program, or facilitators. Along with this shift in time interval between practicum sessions, there was a change in curriculum content from dealing with the problems of the present, to looking ahead at future goals. This time interval change appeared to serve the purposes for which it had been included. All through the course of this implementation period, networking had begun to take place between families involved in this practicum. During this later, extended interval phase, from session seven to session nine, there was an even greater incidence of networking and contact between families. It was as if the routine of meeting once a week was followed, but outside of the normal classroom sessions of this practicum.

From the second session on, there were numerous stories of family relationship successes brought about by this practicum solution process. Perhaps the most dramatic example occurred when the children were asked to write a letter to their noncustodial parent, or to call and tell them how they felt when their parents fought or argued, as applicable. The single parent and child verbal reports on that process were very stirring, and served as an emotional rallying point for all present. Week after week, it was

obvious from self reports and from outward manifestations such as touching, hugging and kissing between single parents and their children, that families were being drawn closer together and progressing in their reorganization. Single parents evidenced increased self esteem and reduced stress, as did their children. It was this climate of expectation for growth and change and reorganization which made it all work as effectively as it did.

During the ninth and last session, single parents were given a Custodial Parent Visitation Stress Survey, a Separation/Divorce Coping Behavior Index for School Age Children, and a Visitation Stress Training Program Evaluation (Appendix K), to be filled out at home and mailed back to the writer. Following the collection of surveys, indexes and questionnaires, the final portion of this implementation phase was an evaluative one. The results from both the pre and post administered Custodial Parent Visitation Stress Surveys and Separation/Divorce Coping Behavior Indexes for School Age Children were compared, and are presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Results

Objective one, to reduce overall familial stress, was measured by the Custodial Parent Visitation Stress Survey, which was administered during the first and last sessions. This survey appears in its entirety in Appendix C. The specific objective of reducing familial stress as evidenced by scores of 50 or less recorded on the second administration of the Custodial Parent Visitation Stress Survey was not met. A score of 50 was arbitrarily established by the writer to avoid predicting a percentile decrease. Single parent post-test scores on this survey instrument averaged 75, with a range from 61 to 91. There was, however, a mean score decrease, or stress reduction, of 21 per cent for all single parents, with a range from 17 per cent to 26 per cent. This decrease in stress correlates with single parent comments made during the course of the practicum, their comments on the Visitation Stress Training Program Evaluation, and the facilitator's observations. See Table 1 for a full presentation of this data. While a score of 50 or less was not obtained, the writer feels that objective one was met through a combination of single parent stress reduction averaging 21 per cent over eleven weeks, and child stress reduction as reported in subsequent paragraphs.

Table 1. Custodial Parent Visitation Stress Survey Results

Single Parent #	Age	Pre-test Score	Post-test Score	Decrease	Decrease%
1	32	102	84	18	17.6
2	33	86	64	22	25.6
3	31	97	79	18	18.6
4	25	82	61	21	25.6
5	27	110	91	19	17.3
6	39	92	73	19	20.7
Mean	31	94.8	75	19.8	20.9

Objective two, to increase the level of school functioning of all participating children, as evidenced by scores of 200 or less on the Separation/Divorce Coping Behavior Index for School Age Children, was met by all participating children. As was stated with objective one, the writer established a calculated, yet arbitrary score to be achieved on the second of two administrations of this index. Both teachers and custodial single parents recorded a mean drop in inappropriate school behaviors of 50 per cent. The magnitude of this combined score drop was unexpected, even with the decrease in single parent stress which was achieved. Table 2 provides the data for all of the children's scores.

The mean percentage decrease in children's inappropriate

school behaviors, as recorded by both the teachers and single parents was approximately the same. The observation period for the single parents was two weeks longer for most of the children, as school had let out just prior to the completion of the implementation phase of this practicum. There are slight differences between the boy's and girl's scores, with approximately the same percentage of decrease in inappropriate school behaviors. It is significant to note that while the single parent's stress decreased, thereby also providing a climate for the decrease of their children's stress, this could not be said of the teachers. The teacher's observations, as recorded on the children's Separation/Divorce Coping Behavior Index for School Age Children, can be considered less subjective and more environmentally separated from the climate of the single parent household. It is apparent that all of the children improved their school behaviors appreciably. While not a criterion of measurement of this practicum, it would be interesting to compute the children's school grades before and after the application of this practicum. This could be accomplished by beginning this implementation during early January, and compare the grades of the first and second halves of the school year. Even though the implementation timeframe is only three months, the writer feels that there would be an increase in children's grades caused by this program's effects, increased parental effectiveness in school homework supervision, increased parent-teacher

communications of a positive nature, and increased teacher empathy for, and interest in, these children. Where school behaviors have worsened and school grades have dropped as a result of the separation or divorce and family turmoil, an increase in school grades would be especially predictable.

Table 2. Separation/Divorce Coping Behavior Index for School Age Children Results

#	Sex	Age	Parent	Teacher Pre-Test	Teacher Post-Test	Decrease	%	Parent Pre-Test	Parent Post-Test	Decrease	%
1	M	10	1	224	82	142	63	232	64	168	72
2	F	6	1	217	91	126	58	221	71	150	68
3	M	12	2	151	89	62	41	122	76	46	38
4	M	10	2	157	122	35	22	165	137	28	17
5	M	7	3	149	71	78	52	170	82	88	51
6	F	11	3	214	109	105	49	231	101	130	56
7	F	12	3	235	93	142	60	217	102	115	53
8	M	10	4	162	90	72	44	147	81	66	45
9	F	8	4	217	142	75	35	205	157	48	23
10	F	9	4	139	70	69	50	157	75	82	52
11	M	7	5	188	92	96	51	201	81	129	60
12	F	9	5	167	71	96	57	158	72	86	54
13	M	8	6	214	127	87	41	199	107	92	46
14	M	12	6	131	62	69	53	141	68	73	52
15	F	10	6	155	81	74	48	163	90	73	45
MEAN		9.4		181	93	89	49	182	91	91	50

Because of the practicum design, there were other positive results which occurred beyond the objectives of this practicum. The relationship between the divorced former spouses generally improved, as did the relationship between the children and their non-custodial fathers. There was an increase in self esteem amongst all who participated, as well as an increase in effective communications between single parent mothers and their children. These enhancements were mentioned in direct conversation with the practicum participants, and in their program evaluations.

One single parent mother requested permission to bring her fiancee to the visitation stress sessions, and he attended six sessions. As he and his future spouse and her sons entered into the session discussions, all of the other families listened intently, practically on the edge of their seats. A great deal of observational learning took place, and future family situations were considered privately by those who might one day face a similar step-parent integration into their family. Although this was not an anticipated situation for this practicum, the writer feels that a great deal of benefit resulted from the inclusion of this special and unexpected guest.

Throughout the implementation phase of this practicum, the writer kept a journal in which he recorded the events which took place, especially the unanticipated events, and the decisions regarding practicum changes. These events and decisions have been incorporated into chapters IV and V, as

part of the flow of events. The use of this journal to record events and decisions as they happened was an invaluable tool, and this technique is highly recommended for all who work with practicums, programs and research.

Feedback from the participants indicates that the length of one and one half hours was optimum to short for this program. Virtually every single parent commented on their evaluation that the program was too short, especially in the areas of self esteem, parent-child communications, and co-parental spouse communications. It appears that a program of twelve consecutive weeks, followed by perhaps three additional sessions every other week, was preferred.

The writer feels that the stress reduction effected by this practicum will have a long-lasting effect on the lives of both the single parents and their children. More than anything, this practicum let each participant know that separation and divorce are components of a reorganization process, and that there is life after divorce, even as the children are journeying back and forth from one parent's home to the other. Stuck in the painful past, the participants turned their attention to the tasks of the present and future, and were able to focus their energy on personal and family goals. The group effect produced a feeling that they were not alone in their struggle to reorganize and sort their lives out.

Conclusions

Although the arbitrarily preselected score for the attainment of objective one was not achieved, it is apparent that with a mean stress reduction of 21 per cent for single parent mothers, a great deal of familial stress was reduced through their participation in this practicum. The verbal comments of single parents, their program evaluation comments, and the subjective, but admissable observations of the facilitators substantiate this familial stress reduction. The validity and reliability of the Custodial Parent Visitation Stress Survey have yet to be assessed, however face validity appears high.

All of the children exceeded the objective two criterion score of 200 for the post-test Separation/Divorce Coping Behavior Index for School Age Children. The mean increase of 50 per cent on this index, as judged by both their teachers and single parents, was unexpectedly high. As was mentioned earlier in this practicum report, this is probably a synergistic combination of several factors. These factors include the stress reduction of the single parents, and their self esteem enhancement, the time dedicated to the children by their custodial parents during this practicum, the children's stress reduction and self esteem boost, and the probable halo effect treatment by their teachers. Cumulatively, all of these factors produced a remarkable degree of behavioral enhancement. Future use of an additional

school grade criterion appears feasible. The reliability and validity of the Separation/Divorce Coping Behavior Index for School Age Children has not been assessed, but there appears to be a reasonably high face validity. The single parent's verbal comments, children's verbal comments and the subjective, yet admissable observations of the facilitators substantiates the enhanced functioning of the participating children.

It is apparent that this practicum produced a stress reduction in both the custodial single parents and children who were embroiled in the visitations of separation and divorce. One single parent mother had been virtually frozen in her family's reorganization, having been divorced over nine years ago. As the practicum implementation ended, she was at last able to contemplate remarriage, and a family move in accordance with her goals. She was at last able to deal with her former spouse in a manner acceptable to her. It was especially rewarding for the facilitators to witness this and other profound changes in the lives of the participants.

The concept of conducting a stress reduction program for both parents and children in the same room, equally participating, is considered the factor primarily responsible for the success of this practicum. The use of a second facilitator, no matter what the size of the group, is considered essential in allowing for somewhat equal adult and child participation. In the case of this practicum, the writer and co-facilitator alternated as adult or child

focused, and this format appeared satisfactory.

In conclusion, it appears from all indicators that this practicum was successful in reducing visitation stress, thereby allowing both custodial single parents and their children to function more capably in a separation or divorce situation. As custodial single parents function at a reduced stress level throughout the reorganization phase of life, they are more capable of providing their children with emotional and physical support. Their children, both from increased parental functioning, and from personal stress reduction, function at a higher level, including their school behaviors and school work. The writer will continue to conduct this visitation stress program beyond the realm of this practicum, as it has generated a great deal of excitement in both the participant and facilitator communities.

Recommendations

The writer has nine specific recommendations based upon the results of this practicum, and the practicum experience itself. First, as separation and divorce increase in frequency in the United States, it is recommended that programs such as this practicum be implemented to assist the families in their reorganization process. Educators and families need to be aware of both the extremely debilitating stress involved in separation, divorce and visitations, and of programs which can effectively deal with these issues. Second, it is recommended that both parents and children be

educated and trained together in a single group. This format appears to be especially powerful with this population, and is considered the key ingredient of this practicum. Third, it is recommended that in a program such as this, homework assignments be given to all participants. In this practicum, single parents and their children were given extensive homework assignments, which then formed the core of the next session. In any continuing program of this nature, these homework assignments are necessary to involve the participants in study and preparation in the interval between program sessions. Fourth, spirituality was stressed in this practicum to a large degree, in opening and closing prayers, and in mandates to parents and children alike to pray individually, and to attend worship services with the family. In this day and age of increasing separation and divorce, high technology, isolation, mobility, and an often long and arduous search for self, spirituality is viewed as an important component of life. It is recommended that in programs such as this practicum, spirituality be considered as a building block in program design, and as a necessary part of the reorganization process. Fifth, even though single parents may be hard pressed financially, it is felt that the payment for services can often be a motivating and learning enhancement factor. The writer feels that programs such as this which require almost perfect attendance are perhaps better attended if the participants have a financial stake. Care must be taken to design an affordable program,

with a sliding scale and scholarships when warranted. Sixth, when two groups such as the single parents and their children are being educated and trained, care must be taken to provide an advocate for each group. Often, one gets caught up in his or her personal issues, or in their age-related issues, and only one group receives their due in an educational situation. It is recommended that separate facilitators be provided for each entity group in a combined grouping. The writer and co-facilitator were able to serve both adults and children each session, thereby enhancing their participation. It is also important that these multiple facilitators be coordinated in their facilitation. In this case, the writer and his wife were the co-facilitators, and may have added a confounding variable to the success of this practicum through their enhanced coordination and facilitation. Seventh, it is recommended to anyone conducting a program such as this visitation stress practicum that the program be in excess of twelve weeks. In this case, the issues were of such a pervasive nature that the general consensus was that the program could have continued on and still achieved a great deal more than was accomplished. Separation, divorce and visitation, and all of the relationships inherent in these issues, take a great deal of time to resolve and evolve to an acceptable and less stressful level. Eighth, the use of grades as an additional criterion for measuring the decrease of children's stress and the increase in their positive school behaviors should be considered in a program such as

this. Although the timeframe of this practicum was short, those children who have been hard hit by the ravages of separation or divorce, perhaps for the second or third time, may have had their grades plummet, and may very well be able to raise their grades over a semester. The combined synergy of this practicum application has already demonstrated that it is an efficient and highly effective visitation stress reduction device. Ninth, it is recommended that future applications of this practicum involve single parent fathers, and, if possible, non-custodial parents of both sexes who are as involved in visitation issues as the custodial parents. A spinoff of this recommendation would be the monitoring of the sex differences, if any, of mothers and sons, and fathers and daughters, and their parent-child relationships, and the relationships in same-sex parent-child combinations.

Dissemination

The results of this practicum have been, and will be, shared in many ways. The writer continues to facilitate additional visitation stress programs, which have been ennanced by the experience of this practicum. At Nova University's Summer Institute 88, which took place in Washington, D.C., many doctoral candidate peers of the writer have expressed a personal interest in the report of this practicum, and will be provided a copy. The community in which the writer resides and works has become aware of

this practicum through advertising, and local interest is high. A copy of this practicum report will remain on file at Nova University in Fort Lauderdale, and will be indexed in information disseminated to all subsequent Nova doctoral candidates in their Ed.D. in Early and Middle Childhood program. If this report merits inclusion, Nova University will forward a copy to the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) for inclusion in their data base. The writer will contact local news media, and present the results of this practicum to them. As conference and workshop presentations become available, the writer will present this report to various professionals interested in stress reduction and child education programs for stress reduction. Finally, the writer will submit a synopsis of this practicum report to appropriate journals for publication.

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APPENDIX A

VISITATION STRESS FLYER

PSYCHOLOGICAL & FAMILY HEALTH ASSOCIATES PRESENTS:

VISITATION STRESS

A 12 week educational training program for separated or divorced single parents and their elementary school children, dealing with issues of:

Loss and grief * Single Parenting * Interpersonal Relationships * Visitation * Co-Parenting * Self-Esteem * Stress * Role Change * School Performance * Parent/Child Communications * Separation/Divorce Factors * Planning for the Future * Goals * Finances * In-Laws * Support Systems

When:

First group session meets on Saturday, April 2, 1988 from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Subsequent groups start on the following Saturday, and will be held in the afternoon.

Where:

Psychological and Family Health Associates - 2830 E. Brown Road, #8, Mesa (NE corner of Brown & Lindsey - across from Mt. View High School).

How:

First hour, single parents and children separate into groups. Second hour, single parents and children form one group.

Who:

Ron and Sherri Clark of Mesa. This dynamic couple will skillfully guide single parents and children through the jungle and swamp of separation and divorce to a meadow of peace and restoration.

Telephone:

830-8999 M-F, 9am - 7pm (answering service after hours)

APPENDIX B

VISITATION STRESS QUESTIONNAIRE

VISITATION STRESS QUESTIONNAIRE (4-88) (CONFIDENTIAL)

NAME_____DATE_____CLASS_____

ADDRESS_____

HOME PHONE #_____WORK PHONE #_____

AGE_____OCCUPATION_____EDUCATION_____

WORKPLACE NAME/ADDRESS_____

LAST MARRIAGE DATE_____LAST SEPARATION/DIV DATE_____

HEALTHCARE INSURANCE PLAN_____POLICY/GROUP #_____

CHILDREN'S NAMES/AGES_____

_____

CHILDREN'S SCHOOL/GRADE/TEACHER_____

_____

DESCRIBE YOUR PRESENT RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR (FORMER) SPOUSE_____

_____

WHAT IS THE MOST STRESSFUL THING IN YOUR LIFE?_____

_____

WHAT ARE YOUR GREATEST CONCERNS AT THIS POINT?_____

_____

IN THE PAST 30 DAYS, OUR FAMILY LIFE HAS:_____

_____

THE HARDEST THING ABOUT BEING A SINGLE PARENT IS:_____

_____

LIST YOUR LOCAL SUPPORT SYSTEM, INCLUDING FAMILY MEMBERS_____

_____

_____

WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO GAIN FROM THIS PROGRAM?_____

_____

_____

_____

CAN YOU REFER A FRIEND TO THIS PROGRAM?_____

_____

APPENDIX C

CUSTODIAL PARENT VISITATION STRESS SURVEY

CUSTODIAL PARENT VISITATION STRESS SURVEY (5-88)

NAME_____ DATE_____

This stress survey is designed to measure your personal stress level, as you deal with the issues of separation, divorce and visitation. Study the following statements and circle the frequency which best applies to you today. There is no time limit.

ATTITUDE OR FEELING	How often feeling occurs: Almost never	Occa-sionally	Fre-quently	Almost always
I really worry about how things will turn out.	1	2	3	4
I am not motivated to do things.	1	2	3	4
My life is running me.	1	2	3	4
I have trouble waking up.	1	2	3	4
I am unable to relax.	1	2	3	4
My children and I are distant.	1	2	3	4
I avoid speaking my mind.	1	2	3	4
I like being alone.	1	2	3	4
My family doesn't support me.	1	2	3	4
My life lacks stimulation.	1	2	3	4
I cry a lot these days.	1	2	3	4
There is no joy in my life.	1	2	3	4
I am lonely.	1	2	3	4
I have aches and pains.	1	2	3	4
I feel tense a lot.	1	2	3	4
I feel that I don't belong.	1	2	3	4
I don't often get what I want.	1	2	3	4
I feel nervous or upset a lot.	1	2	3	4
I think that I am barely coping.	1	2	3	4
I just don't fit in with people.	1	2	3	4
My former spouse and I don't talk.	1	2	3	4

ATTITUDE OR FEELING	How often feeling occurs: Almost never	Occasionally	Frequently	Almost always
Day to day life is monotonous.	1	2	3	4
I am sluggish and lack energy.	1	2	3	4
My former spouse and I argue a lot.	1	2	3	4
I dread it when the children visit with their other parent.	1	2	3	4
I worry about child custody.	1	2	3	4
I don't have enough money to make it.	1	2	3	4
My life is sadder now.	1	2	3	4
I feel bad about being a single parent.	1	2	3	4
Things just seem to happen to me.	1	2	3	4
Nothing seems to work out very well.	1	2	3	4
My appetite is not under control.	1	2	3	4
I wish my spouse ill will.	1	2	3	4
My parents are unsupportive.	1	2	3	4
Few people love me.	1	2	3	4
I can't remember as much as I used to.	1	2	3	4
I worry about my weight.	1	2	3	4
I feel weaker physically.	1	2	3	4
My stomach bothers me.	1	2	3	4
Marriage is not for me.	1	2	3	4
I feel that I would like to start life all over again.	1	2	3	4

APPENDIX D

SEPARATION/DIVORCE COPING BEHAVIOR INDEX FOR SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN

SEPARATION/DIVORCE COPING BEHAVIOR INDEX FOR SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN

Please rate every item by circling the number which best matches the behavior pattern of this child. If there is a shift in behavior, take this into account when marking. There is no time limit on this index.(3-88)

NAME_____

Number 1. You have not noticed this behavior at all.
Number 2. You have noticed the behavior to a slight degree.
Number 3. You have noticed the behavior to a considerable degree.
Number 4. You have noticed the behavior to a large degree.
Number 5. You have noticed the behavior to a very large degree.

Shows erratic, flighty or scattered behavior.	1	2	3	4	5
Questions indicate a worry about the future.	1	2	3	4	5
Indicates other children pick on him/her.	1	2	3	4	5
Does not ask questions.	1	2	3	4	5
Upset if he/she makes a mistake.	1	2	3	4	5
Is easily distracted; does not persevere.	1	2	3	4	5
complains he/she never gets his/her share.	1	2	3	4	5
Gives inappropriate responses.	1	2	3	4	5
Shows too much remorse about wrongdoing.	1	2	3	4	5
Attention span not increased by reward.	1	2	3	4	5
Does not show imagination.	1	2	3	4	5
Will not forgive others.	1	2	3	4	5
Is upset if things do not turn out perfect.	1	2	3	4	5
Attention span is short.	1	2	3	4	5
Has trouble remembering things.	1	2	3	4	5
Accuses others of things they did not do.	1	2	3	4	5
Shows poor vocabulary.	1	2	3	4	5
Complains others do not like him.	1	2	3	4	5
Cannot finish what he/she is doing.	1	2	3	4	5
Blames him/her self if things go wrong.	1	2	3	4	5
Does not show common sense.	1	2	3	4	5
Shows many fears.	1	2	3	4	5

Number 1. You have not noticed this behavior at all.
Number 2. You have noticed the behavior to a slight degree.
Number 3. You have noticed the behavior to a considerable degree.
Number 4. You have noticed the behavior to a large degree.
Number 5. You have noticed the behavior to a very large degree.

Tells bizarre stories.----------1 2 3 4 5
Shows poor reading----------1 2 3 4 5
Becomes overexcited easily.----------1 2 3 4 5
Uses unintelligible language.----------1 2 3 4 5
Displays a don't care attitude;does what he/she wants----------1 2 3 4 5
Shows poor spelling.----------1 2 3 4 5
Tells falsehoods.----------1 2 3 4 5
Is hyperactive and restless.----------1 2 3 4 5
Daydreams.----------1 2 3 4 5
Appears tense.----------1 2 3 4 5
Does not follow through on promises.----------1 2 3 4 5
Shows explosive and unpredictable behavior----1 2 3 4 5
Shows tics and grimaces without any reason.---1 2 3 4 5
Worries too much.----------1 2 3 4 5
Takes things which do not belong to him/her.--1 2 3 4 5
Follows academic directions poorly.----------1 2 3 4 5
Secretly laughs or talks to him/her self.-----1 2 3 4 5
Shows little respect for authority.----------1 2 3 4 5
Blushes easily.----------1 2 3 4 5
Rotates or rocks his/her body.----------1 2 3 4 5
Assignments are poorly written.----------1 2 3 4 5
Is tardy.----------1 2 3 4 5
Is impulsive.----------1 2 3 4 5
Makes wierd drawings.----------1 2 3 4 5
Is involved in undesirable escapades.---------1 2 3 4 5
Appears nervous.----------1 2 3 4 5
Is unaware of what's going on around him/her.-1 2 3 4 5
Homework is not done or incomplete.----------1 2 3 4 5
Cannot control self(will speak out or jump up)1 2 3 4 5

APPENDIX E

VISITATION STRESS PROGRAM OUTLINE

VISITATION STRESS PROGRAM OUTLINE (4-88)

SESSION 1: COPING

- Self-esteem issues
- Coping skills
- Attachment/grief/loss issues
- Stress reduction techniques
- Meditation
- Separation/divorce normative issues
- Single parent/child issues
- Family/social support systems
- Visitation issues
- Coparenting issues intro

SESSION 2: PARENT/CHILD COMMUNICATIONS

- Self-esteem issues
- Single parenting skills
- Stress reduction techniques
- Active listening skills of parents/children
- Direct expression of feelings between parents/children
- Sibling relationships
- Visitation issues
- Limit setting
- Negotiation
- Coparenting issues
- Extended family relationships

SESSION 3: SPOUSAL RELATIONSHIP

- Self-esteem issues
- Coping skills
- Stress reduction techniques
- Ongoing spousal relationship/ coparenting
- Parent/child issues
- Single parent skills
- School behaviors
- Kin-network family relationships
- Visitation issues

SESSION 4: SPOUSE/CHILD RELATIONSHIPS

- Self-esteem issues
- Coping skills
- Stress reduction techniques
- Ongoing spousal relationship/ coparenting
- Changing marital/parental roles
- Financial/job/education issues
- Single parent skills
- Visitation issues
- Spouse/parent/child issues

SESSION 5: CHANGING PARENTAL ROLES

- Self-esteem issues
- Coping skills
- Stress reduction techniques
- Coparenting
- Changing marital/parental roles
- Financial/job/education issues
- Single parent skills
- Visitation issues
- Problem solving
- Planning for the future

SESSION 6: PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

- Self-esteem issues
- Coping skills
- Stress reduction techniques
- Coparenting
- Single parent issues
- Problem solving
- Planning for the future
- Reorganization of the family
- Remarriage issues

SESSION 7: PROBLEM SOLVING 1

- Self-esteem issues
- Coping skills
- Stress reduction techniques
- Problem solving
- Goal setting-short range

SESSION 8: PROBLEM SOLVING 2

- Self-esteem issues
- Coping skills
- Stress reduction techniques
- Problem solving
- Goal setting-midrange

SESSION 9: PROBLEM SOLVING 3

- Self-esteem issues
- Coping skills
- Stress reduction techniques
- Problem solving
- Goal setting-long range
- Graduation

APPENDIX F

VISITATION STRESS PROGRAM STRESSORS

VISITATION STRESS PROGRAM

STRESSORS

CUSTODIAL PARENT	MANIFESTATIONS
RELATIONSHIP WITH SEPARATING/DIVORCING SPOUSE	DEPRESSION
WHETHER LEFT OR LEAVER	ANGER
PRESSURE FROM FAMILY OR FRIENDS	ACCEPTANCE
FINANCES	RELIEF
CHILDCARE	INCREASED SADNESS
RELOCATION	LACK OF INTEREST IN ROUTINE
CUSTODY ISSUES/VISITATION	SLEEP, APPETITE DISTURBED
ROLE CHANGES	
LONELINESS	
CHILDREN ACTING OUT	
JOB DEMANDS	
FORMER SPOUSE REMARRIES	
CUSTODIAL PARENT REMARRIES	

CHILDREN	
EMOTIONALITY OF CUSTODIAL PARENT	DEPRESSION
LOSS OF NONCUSTODIAL PARENT	ANGER
LOSS OF IN-LAW VISITATION	GUILT
STIGMA OF SEPARATION/DIVORCE	REGRESSION
ANIMOSITY TOWARD PARENT(S)	SADNESS
RELOCATION	ACTING OUT HOME/SCHOOL
SIBLING RIVALRY	
NONCUSTODIAL PARENT REMARRIES	
CUSTODIAL PARENT REMARRIES	
LESS MONEY FOR COMFORT ITEMS	
VISITATION	
CUSTODY	

APPENDIX G

VISITATION STRESS SCHEDULE

VISITATION STRESS SCHEDULE (4-88)

CLASS M-1

SESSION	DAY	DATE	TIME	PLACE
1	SATURDAY	APRIL 2	5-7pm	E. VALLEY COUNS CTR
2	SATURDAY	APRIL 9	5-7pm	E. VALLEY COUNS CTR
3	SATURDAY	APRIL 16	5-7pm	E. VALLEY COUNS CTR
4	FRIDAY	APRIL 23	5-7pm	1711 E. BROWN RD
5	SATURDAY	APRIL 30	5-7pm	E. VALLEY COUNS CTR
6	SATURDAY	MAY 7	5-7pm	E. VALLEY COUNS CTR
7	SATURDAY	MAY 21	5-7pm	E. VALLEY COUNS CTR
8	SATURDAY	JUNE 4	5-7pm	E. VALLEY COUNS CTR
9	SATURDAY	JUNE 18	5-7pm	E. VALLEY COUNS CTR

APPENDIX H

VISITATION STRESS HANDOUTS

VISITATION STRESS HANDOUTS (4-88)

1. Guidelines For Parents
2. 40 Tips For Better Single Parenting
3. Visitation Guidelines
4. Facts About Single Parent Families
5. Resource Organizations For Single Parent Families
6. What Custodial Parents Should Know About Child Support
7. Schools, Single Parents And Their Children
8. Separation And Divorce Reading List For Parents
9. Selected Literature For Children And Teens
10. Mothers Raising Sons
11. Single Parenting Reading List
12. Family Secrets
13. The Latchkey Dilemma
14. In-Laws Can't Be Ex-Laws
15. Parent Burnout: Are You A Candidate?
16. Many Good Parents Just Happen To Be Single
17. Why Full-time Parenting Is Good, Even When It's Bad
18. Don't Spoil Your Kids Through Divorce Guilt
19. Self-Care: Insurance Against Abusing Others
20. Handling Your Independence While Reassuring Your Kids
21. Children's Civility Didn't End With Jane Austen
22. The Problem With Lies-They Lead To More Lies
23. Avoiding guilt And Blame To Cut Down On Family Arguments
24. Fitting Punishment To the Crime
25. Yelling: The Medium Is The Message
26. Adjusting To Two Households Can Be Painful For Everyone
27. When Your Ex Breezes Back Into Your Children's Lives
28. Conflicts Children Face When Travelling Between Parents
29. Living Through Adolescence-Giving It Time
30. Making The Grade As A Single Parent
31. What Helps Children Of Divorce
32. Children And Depression
33. Kids And Anger
34. A Healthy Future
35. Positively No!
36. Regain The Power
37. Resolved, Sort Of
38. Missing Fathers
39. Task Overload
40. Financial Crisis
41. Isolation And Self-Doubt
42. Lingering Bitterness
43. How To Deal With Your Teenager
44. The 12 Steps Of Parenting/10 Ways To Help A Pre-Teen Say No
45. What Can A Parent Do?
46. 8 Ways Parents Can Tell If A Child Is Using Drugs/Say No Technique

APPENDIX I

VISITATION STRESS INSTRUCTOR'S OUTLINES

VISITATION STRESS OUTLINE

SESSION ONE

HOUR ONE

ADULTS

COPING

OPENING PRAYER
FIRST NAME INTRODUCTIONS
COMPLETE QUESTIONNAIRE
COMPLETE ADULT STRESS SURVEY
HAND OUT CBI's
    Parent's complete at home and return next week
    For teacher(s) to complete and mail back to me--NEXT WEEK
OVERVIEW OF VS PROGRAM
SCHEDULE
OUTLINE
SELF ESTEEM ISSUES
LEFT/LEAVER DIFFERENCES AND SELF ESTEEM
COPING SKILLS HOUSEHOLD/PARENT/JOB/FRIENDS & FAMILY
ATTACHMENT/GRIEF/LOSS/ISSUES
EMOTIONS: ANGER, DEPRESSION,FEAR, SLOWING OF CHILD EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT
STRESS REDUCTION TECHNIQUES BREATHING DEEPLY PACING RECREATION EXERCISE
MEDITATION HERBERT BENSON
SEPARATION/DIVORCE NORMATIVE ISSUES EXPOUND FOR A WHILE
SINGLE PARENT/CHILD ISSUES
FAMILY/SOCIAL SUPPORT SYSTEMS
INTRODUCTION TO COPARENTING ISSUES INVITE NONCUSTODIAL PARENT TO VS

PERSONAL ISSUES DIGRESS, IF TIME PERMITS

HAND OUT AND EXPLAIN HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT

OBTAIN A COMMITMENT TO ATTEND ALL NINE SESSIONS, AND TO DROP BY FOR ANY

CLOSING PRAYER

FIVE MINUTE BREAK

VISITATION STRESS OUTLINE

SESSION ONE

HOUR ONE

CHILDREN

COPING

OPENING PRAYER
FIRST NAME INTRODUCTIONS
TELL THEM WHY WE'RE HERE 12 WEEK PROGRAM 9 SESSIONS MAKE THEM FEEL BETTE
SELF ESTEEM ISSUES AS CHILDREN OF SEPARATION AND DIVORCE AND FAMILY PROBLEMS
TALK ABOUT SELF ESTEEM WHY THEY MIGHT FEEL BADLY ABOUT THEMSELVES
COPING SKILLS HOW THEY CAN INDIVIDUALLY SURVIVE THAT THEY WILL SURVIVE
HOME SCHOOL
ATTACHMENT/GRIEF/LOSS DID THEY LOSE ANYTHING? ARE THEY LOSING ANYTHING?
STRESS REDUCTION WHAT IS STRESS? TALK ABOUT DEEP BREATHING EXERCISES
DEPRESSION HOW A CHILD CAN BE SAD AND DEPRESSED
NAME THOSE EMOTIONS WHAT ARE YOU FEELING? GET SEVERAL ANSWERS
IS SCHOOL BETTER NOW OR BEFORE?
DID THEY GAIN ANYTHING FROM THIS SEPARATION/DIVORCE/PROBLEM?
ARE THEY HAPPY OR SAD?
WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN TO THEM?

PERSONAL ISSUES HOW THEY FEEL ABOUT ALL OF THIS (AS TIME PERMITS)

HAND OUT AND EXPLAIN HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT

CLOSE AT 5 MINUTES TO THE HOUR

CLOSING PRAYER

GIVE THEM A FIVE MINUTE BREAK MUST STAY INSIDE

VISITATION STRESS OUTLINE

SESSION ONE

HOUR TWO

ADULTS/CHILDREN COMBINED

COPING

OPENING PRAYER--ALL HOLD HANDS
FIRST NAME INTRODUCTIONS
FREE ASSOCIATION: PARENT AND CHILD ANSWERS

SEPARATION	DIVORCE	FIGHT	CRY
MONEY	HOME	SCHOOL	FAMILY
ANGER	GUILTY	HAPPY	CHURCH

HAVE WE LOST ANYTHING IN THIS SEPARATION/DIVORCE/PROBLEM?
IS SEPARATION/DIVORCE/THIS PROBLEM GOOD OR BAD?
ARE WE GOOD OR BAD BECAUSE WE'RE INVOLVED IN SEPARATION/DIVORCE?
CAN WE SURVIVE SEPARATION/DIVORCE?
SINGLE PARENT/CHILD ROLE DIFFERENCES IN SEPARATION/DIVORCE
SOCIAL SUPPORT SYSTEMS FAMILY FRIENDS CHURCH AGENCIES COUNSELING
VISITATION RESPONSIBILITIES (STRESS REDUCTION)
COPARENTING (DEFINE) EVOLVES REMARRIAGE OF EITHER OR BOTH SPOUSES

PERSONAL ISSUES AS TIME PERMITS

HOMEWORK REMINDER NEXT SESSION'S TOPIC IS: PARENT/CHILD COMMUNICATIONS
STUDY--CLIP ARTICLES--PREPARE TO DISCUSS
CLOSING PRAYER ALL HOLD HANDS

VISITATION STRESS INSTRUCTOR'S OUTLINE

SESSION TWO: PARENT/CHILD COMMUNICATIONS

Opening Prayer---All stand and hold hands--choose someone

First name introductions

HOMEWORK REVISITED

Did parent send children's teacher CB Index?
Have parents turn in completed CB Indexes
Discuss their thoughts about Handouts 1-10 and 32/33.

Discuss their stressors list. Any ideas for stress reduction?
- meditation
- deep breathing
- visualization
- sharing feelings with someone
- changing environment

Discuss their listing of their personal strengths.
- discuss ways to increase/enhance self-esteem

Discuss what they thought their biggest family problem was. Ask kids.

Remind them that prayer and church attendance were a part of the homework.

SINGLE PARENTING SKILLS Discuss
role changes---how are they doing?

Briefly discuss transactional analysis

ACTIVE LISTENING SKILLS OF PARENTS AND CHILDREN--Put your feelings on the back burner Ask kids if its easier to talk to parents before or after divorce. Role play different situations--Use kids if possible

EXPRESSING FEELINGS ABOUT SEPARATION AND DIVORCE. Ask kids to express their feelings

SIBLING RELATIONSHIPS Discuss
role conflict---you're the Dad or Mom of the family now!
responsibilities in the family

VISITATION ISSUES Discuss all families present

LIMIT SETTING ---Discuss

NEGOTIATION---Discuss

COPARENTING ISSUES ---Discuss

EXTENDED FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS ---Discuss

Personal Items---As time permits

Mention next class session

CLOSING PRAYER---All stand and hold hands---Choose someone

VISITATION STRESS INSTRUCTOR'S OUTLINE

SESSION THREE---SPOUSAL RELATIONSHIP

OPENING PRAYER---ALL STAND AND HOLD HANDS --CHOOSE SOMEONE.

FIRST NAME INTRODUCTIONS.

HOMEWORK REVISITED

CUSTODIAL PARENT VS SURVEY COMPLETED??
CB INDEX COMPLETED BY PARENT/TEACHER??
DISCUSS THEIR THOUGHTS ABOUT HANDOUTS 11-20.
DISCUSS THEIR LETTERS TO THEIR CHILDREN.
DISCUSS CHILDREN'S LETTERS TO THEIR PARENTS.
DISCUSS THE ONE HOUR FOR EACH CHILD PROGRAM.
DISCUSS CHILDREN'S NOTES TO BROTHERS/SISTERS.
COLLECT LETTERS TO ME DESCRIBING SPOUSAL RELATIONSHIP.
DISCUSS HOW CHILDREN HELPED PARENTS MORE.
WAS THERE PRAYER??
DID THE FAMILY ATTEND CHURCH??
WERE THERE HUGS AND KISSES??

DISCUSS THE COPARENTING RELATIONSHIP OPENLY, WITH PARENT/CHILD POINTS OF VIEW EXPRESSED.

DISCUSS VISITATION ISSUES.

DISCUSS CHANGING PARENTAL/MARITAL ROLES.

FINANCIAL/EDUCATION/JOB ISSUES.

SINGLE PARENT SKILLS ADULT/CHILD POINTS OF VIEW.

CHILDREN'S SCHOOL BEHAVIORS.

PARENT/CHILD ISSUES

KIN/NETWORK FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS.

PERSONAL ITEMS---AS TIME PERMITS.

MENTION DATE/TIME/LOCATION OF NEXT SESSION.

LOOK AT NEXT WEEK'S HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT.

CLOSING PRAYER--ALL STAND AND HOLD HANDS---CHOOSE SOMEONE.

VISITATION STRESS INSTRUCTOR'S OUTLINE

SESSION FOUR---SPOUSE/CHILD RELATIONSHIPS

OPENING PRAYER--ALL STAND AND HOLD HANDS---CHOOSE SOMEONE.

FIRST NAME INTRODUCTIONS.

HOMEWORK REVISITED

CUSTODIAL PARENT VS SURVEY COMPLETED?
CB INDEX COMPLETED BY PARENT?
DISCUSS THEIR THOUGHTS ABOUT HANDOUTS 21-30.
DISCUSS PARENT'S LETTERS TO FORMER SPOUSES.
DISCUSS CHILDREN'S LETTERS TO NONCUSTODIAL PARENTS.
DISCUSS THE "ONE HOUR A WEEK WITH EACH CHILD" PROGRAM.
DISCUSS ROLE CHANGES OF SINGLE PARENTS.
DISCUSS THE THINGS WHICH THE CHILDREN COULD IMPROVE ON AT HOME/SCHOOL.
DISCUSS SINGLE PARENT EDUCATIONAL/EMPLOYMENT GOALS.
DISCUSS HOW CHILDREN HELP PARENTS.
DISCUSS THE WAYS IN WHICH CHILDREN COULD BE BETTER SIBLINGS.
PRAYER.
ATTENDING CHURCH.
HUGS AND KISSES?

DISCUSS THE ONGOING SPOUSAL RELATIONSHIP.

DISCUSS RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN CHILDREN AND NONCUSTODIAL PARENT.

DISCUSS RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN CHILDREN AND CUSTODIAL PARENT.

PERSONAL ITEMS---AS TIME PERMITS.

MENTION TIME/DATE/LOCATION OF NEXT SESSION.

LOOK AT NEXT WEEK'S HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT.

CLOSING PRAYER---ALL STAND AND HOLD HANDS---CHOOSE SOMEONE.

VISITATION STRESS INSTRUCTOR'S OUTLINE

SESSION FIVE---CHANGING PARENTAL ROLES

OPENING PRAYER---ALL STAND AND HOLD HANDS---CHOOSE SOMEONE.

FIRST NAME INTRODUCTIONS.

HOMEWORK REVISITED.

CUSTODIAL PARENT VS SURVEY COMPLETED?
CB INDEX COMPLETED BY PARENT AND TEACHER?
DISCUSS THEIR THOUGHTS ABOUT HANDOUTS 31-40.
DISCUSS COPARENTING ISSUES WHICH SP WANT TO IMPROVE.
DISCUSS HOW CHILDREN FEEL THEIR SINGLE PARENT HAS CHANGED AS A SP.
HAVE SINGLE PARENTS SPENT THEIR SPECIAL TIME WITH EACH CHILD?
DISCUSS CHILDREN'S PLANS FOR THE SUMMER.
DISCUSS SINGLE PARENT'S MOST PRESSING UNRESOLVED PROBLEM.
DISCUSS WITH CHILDREN WHAT REALLY MAKES THEM HAPPY.
DISCUSS SINGLE PARENT'S FUTURE PLANS.
ASK CHILDREN IF THEY HELPED THEIR SP AS MUCH AS THEY COULD.
ASK ALL IF THEY HAVE PRAYED.
ASK ALL IF THEY HAVE ATTENDED CHURCH AS A FAMILY.

DISCUSS CHANGING MARITAL/PARENTAL ROLES IN A SINGLE PARENT FAMILY.

DISCUSS FINANCIAL/JOB/EDUCATION ISSUES.

DISCUSS SINGLE PARENT SKILLS.

DISCUSS VISITATION ISSUES.

DISCUSS PROBLEM SOLVING.

DISCUSS PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE.

PERSONAL ITEMS---AS TIME PERMITS.

MENTION TIME/DATE/LOCATION OF NEXT SESSION.

LOOK AT NEXT WEEK'S HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT.

CLOSING PRAYER---ALL STAND AND HOLD HANDS---CHOOSE SOMEONE.

VISITATION STRESS INSTRUCTOR'S OUTLINE

SESSION SIX---PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

OPENING PRAYER---ALL STAND AND HOLD HANDS---CHOOSE SOMEONE

FIRST NAME INTRODUCTIONS

HOMEWORK REVISITED

SURVEYS/INDEXES COMPLETED?
DISCUSS HANDOUTS 41-46
DISCUSS WAYS IN WHICH SINGLE PARENTS SOLVE PROBLEMS
DISCUSS CHILDREN'S PLANS FOR THE REST OF THE YEAR
DISCUSS SINGLE PARENT'S PLANS FOR THE REST OF THE YEAR
DISCUSS CHILDREN'S PICTURE OR PARAGRAPH ABOUT THEIR FAMILY
DISCUSS SINGLE PARENT'S PARAGRAPH ABOUT THEIR FAMILY'S REORGANIZATION
DISCUSS WHAT CHILDREN THINK ABOUT THEIR SINGLE PARENT GETTING MARRIED AGA
DISCUSS SINGLE PARENT'S THOUGHTS ABOUT REMARRIAGE
DISCUSS HOW CHILDREN HELPED THEIR SINGLE PARENT
DISCUSS CHILDREN'S TALKS WITH SINGLE PARENTS ABOUT THE FUTURE
PRAY OFTEN
ATTENDING CHURCH AS A FAMILY

DISCUSS SHORT RANGE GOAL SETTING---PRESENT TIME TO CHRISTMAS 1988

DISCUSS PERSONAL ITEMS AS TIME PERMITS

MENTION TIME/DATE/LOCATION OF NEXT SESSION

LOOK AT NEXT WEEK'S HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT

CLOSING PRAYER---ALL STAND AND HOLD HANDS---CHOOSE SOMEONE

VISITATION STRESS INSTRUCTOR'S OUTLINE

SESSION SEVEN---PROBLEM SOLVING 1

OPENING PRAYER---ALL STAND AND HOLD HANDS---CHOOSE SOMEONE

FIRST NAME INTRODUCTIONS

HOMEWORK REVISITED

SURVEYS/INDEXES COMPLETED?
DISCUSS THREE FAVORITE HANDOUTS
DISCUSS CHILDREN'S TWO BIGGEST PROBLEMS
DISCUSS SINGLE PARENT'S SOLUTION TO THEIR THREE BIGGEST PROBLEMS
DISCUSS CHILDREN'S 1989 PLANS
DISCUSS PARENT'S 1989 PLANS
DISCUSS SINGLE PARENT'S SPECIAL TIME WITH EACH CHILD
DISCUSS CHILDREN'S HELPING THEIR SINGLE PARENTS
DISCUSS CHILDREN'S TALK WITH THEIR SINGLE PARENT ABOUT THEIR FAMILY'S FUT.
DISCUSS PRAYING OFTEN
DISCUSS ATTENDING CHURCH AS A FAMILY

BRIEFLY DISCUSS GOALS BEYOND 1989---PERSONAL AND FAMILY

DISCUSS PERSONAL ITEMS AS TIME PERMITS

MENTION TIME/DATE/LOCATION OF NEXT SESSION

LOOK AT NEXT WEEK'S HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT

CLOSING PRAYER---ALL STAND AND HOLD HANDS---CHOOSE SOMEONE

VISITATION STRESS INSTRUCTOR'S OUTLINE

SESSION EIGHT---PROBLEM SOLVING 2

OPENING PRAYER---ALL STAND AND HOLD HANDS---CHOOSE SOMEONE

FIRST NAME INTRODUCTIONS

HOMEWORK REVISITED

- SURVEYS/INDEXES COMPLETED?
- DISCUSS ADULT'S SELF ESTEEM
- DISCUSS CHILDREN'S PARAGRAPH ON HOW THEY FEEL ABOUT THEMSELVES
- DISCUSS SINGLE PARENT'S COPING SKILLS
- DISCUSS CHILDREN'S CAREER GOALS
- HAS THE STRESS IN SINGLE PARENT'S LIVES BEEN REDUCED? DISCUSS
- DID CHILDREN HELP SINGLE PARENTS AS MUCH AS THEY COULD?
- ARE SINGLE PARENTS ABLE TO SOLVE SINGLE PARENTING PROBLEMS?
- WHAT DID CHILDREN DO FOR EACH BROTHER/SISTER?
- DISCUSS ADULT'S PERSONAL AND FAMILY GOALS FOR THE NEXT TWO YEARS
- DID SINGLE PARENTS GIVE EACH CHILD HIS/HER SPECIAL TIME?
- DID ALL PRAY OFTEN?
- DID ALL ATTEND CHURCH AS A FAMILY?

DISCUSS SINGLE PARENT'S SUPPORT NETWORK IN DEPTH

DISCUSS PERSONAL ITEMS AS TIME PERMITS

MENTION TIME/DATE/LOCATION OF NEXT SESSION

LOOK AT NEXT WEEK'S HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT

CLOSING PRAYER---ALL STAND AND HOLD HANDS---CHOOSE SOMEONE

VISITATION STRESS INSTRUCTOR'S OUTLINE

SESSION NINE---PROBLEM SOLVING 3

OPENING PRAYER---ALL STAND AND HOLD HANDS---CHOOSE SOMEONE

FIRST NAME INTRODUCTIONS

HOMEWORK REVISITED

- ADULTS DISCUSS THEIR CHILDREN'S SELF ESTEEM
- CHILDREN DESCRIBE THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH THEIR SINGLE PARENT
- ADULTS DISCUSS THE WAYS IN WHICH THEY HAVE ADJUSTED AND COPED WITH LIFE
- CHILDREN DESCRIBE THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH EACH OF THEIR BROTHERS AND SISTERS
- ADULTS DISCUSS THEIR MOST EFFECTIVE STRESS REDUCTION TECHNIQUES
- CHILDREN DISCUSS HELPING THEIR SINGLE PARENT AS MUCH AS THEY COULD
- ADULTS DISCUSS ANY MAJOR PROBLEMS ON THE HORIZON
- CHILDREN DISCUSS DOING SOMETHING NICE FOR THEIR BROTHER OR SISTER LAST WEEK
- ADULTS DISCUSS THEIR SPECIAL TIME WITH EACH CHILD
- PRAY OFTEN
- ATTEND CHURCH WITH THE FAMILY

DISCUSS PERSONAL ITEMS AS TIME PERMITS

CONGRATULATE ALL FOR THEIR PROGRESS AND HARD WORK

CLOSING PRAYER---ALL STAND AND HOLD HANDS---CHOOSE SOMEONE

DISTRIBUTE EVALUATIONS, SURVEYS, AND INDEXES

APPENDIX J

VISITATION STRESS HOMEWORK

VISITATION STRESS HOMEWORK

SESSION ONE---COPING

ADULTS

HELP CHILDREN WITH THEIR HOMEWORK

SEND TEACHER'S CBI FOR EACH CHILD TO SCHOOL---MAIL BACK

COMPLETE CBI FOR EACH CHILD AND BRING TO NEXT SESSION

READ HANDOUTS 1-10, and 32, 33 BEFORE NEXT SESSION

COPY AND SEND HANDOUT #7 TO SCHOOL WITH YOUR CHILDREN

LIST STRESSORS IN YOUR LIFE AND BRING TO NEXT SESSION

IDENTIFY YOUR PERSONAL STRENGTHS AND BRING TO NEXT SESSION

IDENTIFY YOUR BIGGEST PERSONAL AND FAMILY PROBLEMS AND BRING THE LIST NEXT TIME

INVITE FAMILY MEMBERS TO ATTEND OUR NEXT SESSION

LET YOUR FRIENDS KNOW ABOUT VISITATION STRESS

PRAY OFTEN AND ATTEND CHURCH AS A FAMILY

CHILDREN

WRITE DOWN HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT WHAT'S GOING ON IN YOUR FAMILY SHARE WITH MOM AND BRING TO NEXT SESSION

WRITE DOWN ALL OF YOUR GOOD POINTS AND TALENTS AND BRING THE LIST NEXT SESSION

WRITE DOWN WHAT YOU THINK IS GOING TO HAPPEN TO YOUR FAMILY AND BRING NEXT SESSION

PRAY INDIVIDUALLY AND WITH YOUR FAMILY

ATTEND CHURCH

IF YOU CAN READ, ASK MOM TO LET YOU READ SOME OF HER HANDOUTS BETWEEN SESSIONS

VISITATION STRESS HOMEWORK

SESSION TWO---PARENT / CHILD COMMUNICATIONS

ADULTS

READ HANDOUTS 11-20.

WRITE EACH CHILD A LETTER, TELLING THEM HOW MUCH YOU LOVE THEM(READ IT TO SMALLER CHILDREN.

SET ASIDE ONE HOUR FOR EACH CHILD EACH WEEK. ENSURE THAT THEY DESIGN WHAT IS TO BE DONE WITHIN THE HOUR (WITHIN LIMITS, OF COURSE).

WRITE A LETTER TO ME, DESCRIBING YOUR PRESENT SPOUSAL/COPARENTING RELATIONSHIP BE SPECIFIC IT WILL BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL BRING IT TO CLASS NEXT WEEK.

PRAY OFTEN, ESPECIALLY WITH THE WHOLE FAMILY.

ATTEND CHURCH AS A FAMILY.

CHILDREN

WRITE A LETTER TO THE PARENT YOU LIVE WITH, TELLING THEM HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT THEM, AND YOUR FAMILY. Give it to them after you write it.

If you have brothers or sisters, write each one of them a short note, telling them how you feel about them.

PLAN TO HAVE AN HOUR EACH WEEK ALONE WITH THE PARENT YOU LIVE WITH, AS A SPECIAL TIME FOR JUST THE TWO OF YOU. PLAN ON THE DAY OF THE WEEK, TIME, AND THE ACTIVITY YOU TWO WILL BE INVOLVED IN.

HELP THE PARENT YOU LIVE WITH , AS MUCH AS YOU CAN.

PRAY OFTEN, ESPECIALLY AS A WHOLE FAMILY.

ATTEND CHURCH EVERY WEEK WITH YOUR FAMILY.

FOR ALL: DON'T FORGET TO HUG AND KISS EACH OTHER AT LEAST ONCE AN HOUR!!!

VISITATION STRESS HOMEWORK

SESSION THREE---SPOUSAL RELATIONSHIP

ADULTS

READ HANDOUTS 21-30.

WRITE YOUR FORMER SPOUSE A LETTER ABOUT COPARENTING ISSUES.

SPEND THAT SPECIAL HOUR EACH WEEK WITH EACH CHILD.

LIST THE ROLE CHANGES YOU HAVE NOTICED AS A SINGLE PARENT.

LIST YOUR EDUCATIONAL/EMPLOYMENT GOALS.

PRAY OFTEN.

ATTEND CHURCH AS A FAMILY.

CHILDREN

WRITE A LETTER TO YOUR NONCUSTODIAL PARENT, TELLING THEM HOW YOU FEEL WHEN THEY ARGUE.

LIST THE THINGS WHICH YOU CAN IMPROVE ON IN SCHOOL, AND AT HOME--BRING THIS LIST TO THE NEXT SESSION.

HELP THE PARENT YOU LIVE WITH AS MUCH AS YOU CAN.

LIST THE WAYS IN WHICH YOU COULD BE NICER TO YOUR BROTHERS/SISTERS.

PRAY OFTEN.

ATTEND CHURCH WITH YOUR FAMILY.

SESSION FOUR---SPOUSE/CHILD RELATIONSHIPS

ADULTS

READ HANDOUTS 31-40.

LIST THREE ISSUES IN COPARENTING THAT YOU WANT TO IMPROVE. BRING LIST.

SPEND THAT SPECIAL HOUR EACH WEEK WITH EACH CHILD.

WHAT IS YOUR MOST PRESSING UNRESOLVED PROBLEM? DISCUSS NEXT SESSION.

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD FOR YOU? DISCUSS NEXT SESSION.

PRAY OFTEN.

ATTEND CHURCH AS A FAMILY.

CHILDREN

HOW HAS YOUR CUSTODIAL PARENT CHANGED NOW THAT SHE/HE IS A SINGLE PARENT?

WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS FOR THE SUMMER?

WHAT REALLY MAKES YOU HAPPY?

HELP THE PARENT YOU LIVE WITH AS MUCH AS YOU CAN.

PRAY OFTEN.

ATTEND CHURCH AS A FAMILY.

VISITATION STRESS HOMEWORK

SESSION FIVE---CHANGING PARENTAL ROLES

ADULTS

READ HANDOUTS 41-46.

LIST THE WAYS IN WHICH YOU SOLVE PROBLEMS. BRING LIST TO NEXT SESSION.

WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS FOR THE REST OF THIS YEAR? DISCUSS NEXT SESSION.

WRITE A PARAGRAPH ABOUT YOUR FAMILY'S REORGANIZATION. BRING TO NEXT SESSION.

WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS CONCERNING REMARRIAGE? DISCUSS NEXT SESSION.

CHILDREN

WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS FOR THE REST OF THIS YEAR? TELL ABOUT THEM NEXT SESSION.

DRAW A PICTURE OR WRITE A PARAGRAPH ABOUT YOUR FAMILY AS IT IS TODAY. BRING TO THE NEXT SESSION.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT YOUR SINGLE PARENT GETTING MARRIED?

HELP THE PARENT YOU LIVE WITH AS MUCH AS YOU CAN.

TALK TO YOUR SINGLE PARENT ABOUT THE FUTURE FOR ALL OF YOU.

PRAY OFTEN.

ATTEND CHURCH AS A FAMILY.

VISITATION STRESS HOMEWORK

SESSION SIX---PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

ADULTS

PICK OUT YOUR THREE FAVORITE HANDOUTS AND DISCUSS THEM NEXT SESSION

LIST THREE PROBLEMS YOU HAVE SOLVED AS A SINGLE PARENT. DISCUSS NEXT SESSION

LIST TWO PROBLEMS YOU HAVEN'T SOLVED AS A SINGLE PARENT. DISCUSS NEXT SESSION

WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS FOR 1989? DISCUSS NEXT SESSION

DON'T FORGET TO GIVE EACH CHILD HIS/HER SPECIAL TIME NEXT WEEK

PRAY OFTEN

ATTEND CHURCH AS A FAMILY

CHILDREN

WHAT ARE YOUR TWO BIGGEST PROBLEMS? DISCUSS WITH MOM

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO BE DOING IN 1989? DISCUSS WITH MOM

HELP THE PARENT YOU LIVE WITH AS MUCH AS YOU CAN

TALK WITH YOUR SINGLE PARENT ABOUT YOUR FAMILY'S FUTURE

PRAY OFTEN

ATTEND CHURCH WITH YOUR FAMILY

VISITATION STRESS HOMEWORK

SESSION SEVEN---PROBLEM SOLVING 1

ADULTS

HOW IS YOUR SELF-ESTEEM? DISCUSS NEXT SESSION.

HOW ARE YOUR COPING SKILLS AS A SINGLE PARENT? DISCUSS NEXT SESSION.

HAS THE STRESS IN YOUR LIFE BEEN REDUCED? DISCUSS NEXT SESSION.

ARE YOU ABLE TO SOLVE SINGLE PARENTING PROBLEMS? DISCUSS NEXT SESSION.

LIST YOUR PERSONAL AND FAMILY GOALS FOR THE NEXT TWO YEARS. DISCUSS NEXT SESS

DON'T FORGET TO GIVE EACH CHILD HIS/HER SPECIAL TIME EACH WEEK.

PRAY OFTEN.

ATTEND CHURCH AS A FAMILY.

CHILDREN

WRITE A PARAGRAPH ON HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT YOURSELF. DISCUSS WITH MOM.

WHAT ARE YOUR CAREER GOALS? DISCUSS WITH MOM.

HELP YOUR SINGLE PARENT AS MUCH AS YOU CAN.

DO SOMETHING NICE FOR EACH OF YOUR BROTHERS/SISTERS NEXT WEEK.

PRAY OFTEN.

ATTEND CHURCH WITH YOUR FAMILY.

VISITATION STRESS HOMEWORK

SESSION EIGHT---PROBLEM SOLVING 2

ADULTS

THINK ABOUT THE SELF ESTEEM OF EACH OF YOUR CHILDREN. DISCUSS NEXT SESSION.

LIST THE WAYS IN WHICH YOU HAVE ADJUSTED AND COPED WITH LIFE. DISCUSS NEXT SESSION.

WHAT ARE YOUR MOST EFFECTIVE STRESS REDUCTION TECHNIQUES? DISCUSS NEXT SESSION.

ANY MAJOR PROBLEMS ON THE HORIZON? DISCUSS NEXT SESSION.

DON'T FORGET TO GIVE EACH CHILD HIS/HER SPECIAL TIME EACH WEEK.

PRAY OFTEN.

ATTEND CHURCH AS A FAMILY.

CHILDREN

DESCRIBE YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR SINGLE PARENT.

DESCRIBE YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH EACH OF YOUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS.

HELP YOUR SINGLE PARENT AS MUCH AS YOU CAN.

DO SOMETHING NICE FOR EACH OF YOUR SISTERS AND BROTHERS NEXT WEEK.

PRAY OFTEN.

ATTEND CHURCH WITH YOUR FAMILY.

APPENDIX K

VISITATION STRESS TRAINING PROGRAM EVALUATION

Visitation Stress Training

Program Evaluation

NAME_____

ADDRESS_____

PHONE_____DATE_____

How would you rate the training sessions overall?

Poor 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Outstanding

What would you add?_____

_____

_____

What would you delete?_____

_____

_____

Did the format suit your needs?(day, hours,groups, parents/ children, educational group)_____

_____

_____

How would you rate the instructors?

Poor 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Outstanding

What additional needs do you or your family have?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____